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DISCOVERY OF A LOST TRAIL

BY

CHARLES B. NEWCOMB

Author of

"ALL'S RIGHT WITH THE WORLD"

*"Ho, ye who suffer! know ye suffer from yourselves.
None else compels—no other holds you that ye live or die."*

SIDDARTHA

*"It is only as a man puts off from himself all external
support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and
to prevail."*

EMERSON

SIXTH EDITION

BOSTON
LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.

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DISCOVERY OF A LOST TRAIL.

Lockwood and Greenhill Press
BOSTON, U.S.A.

To all who have sought and have not found

The Paths of Peace and Power

I dedicate these pages.

C. B. N.

It is not enough to have this globe or a certain time, I
will have thousands of globes and all time.

WALT WHITMAN.

Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are
well able to overcome it.

CALEB, *Prince of Judah.*

P R E F A C E .

THREE is nothing new in this book. It is a simple study of that strange and beautiful thing which we call life. It contains only a few familiar signboards that have helped some bewildered travellers to find their way in paths that seemed mountainous and difficult.

Plain suggestions of confidence, patience, gladness, and decision often bring us back to the trail we have lost through the uncertainty of our own power and freedom.

When we really are assured of the right road we can truly believe that life is a song and not a cry.

When we can feel confident that all wanderers will at last come through the stress of storm and fog in which they have seemed to miss their way we are cheered and comforted.

The lights of the hospice gleam in the darkness, and we know that within are abundant food and warmth for every belated traveller.

We are sometimes gladdened by a fresh touch upon the strings of the harp of Life.

The sounding of a few old chords may soothe and comfort us like the cradle-songs of infancy.

The writer has not aimed at metaphysical fugues or oratorios.

If the reader is looking for novelties in philosophy, or sublime strains in the harmonies of thought, let him close this volume with the preface, for critics will find it without rhyme or reason.

There are, doubtless, many worldly-wise ones who will protest impatiently that these teachings are not practical.

This objection will come from some to whom the life of the soul has been but a theory for intellectual analysis.

It will not come from any who have passed the threshold of spiritual experience.

It will come oftenest from those whose "practical" methods have never gained for them the success or happiness they sought.

If these pages should aid any troubled soul to discover the inner light that shines upon the path of life—if they should open the spiritual vision to discern the mighty hosts encamped about us to deliver us—the lost trail will indeed be found, and as fellow-pilgrims we will go on our way rejoicing.

CHARLES B. NEWCOMB.

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I.

THE LOST TRAIL.

So must you press forward to open your soul to the Eternal. But it must be the Eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth.

For in the one case you develop in the luxuriance of purity, in the other you harden by the forcible passion for personal stature. — *“Light on the Path.”*

IT is related that in the ancient days there were rich mines of gold in Central Africa. These mines yielded millions to the Egyptian government under the early Pharaohs.

In the succeeding wars for existence mining was neglected, and all knowledge of these valuable deposits was lost for several centuries. Later the Romans discovered and reopened the gold fields. They constructed a stone road up the Nile Valley. This road stretched out across the desert to the ancient mines. But it was afterwards neglected and buried in sand by the hot winds. Portions of it have been found at different times by various explorers, but the place of the hidden treasures is no longer known, and the broken trail ends in a trackless desert.

This page from a chapter of history has its correspondence in the thought life of the race and

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Age follows a chapter of history has its
ideals, its thought life of the race and

(9)

in many an individual experience. Man's undiscovered country is the largest part of his domains. His undeveloped resources are his richest treasures ; his latent powers are his mightiest forces. In the struggle for existence, his spiritual nature has been often buried by the hot sands of his selfishness and mercenary ambitions. Greed of gold and worldly power has chilled and blighted his higher purposes. The race has often fallen into periods which we call "Dark Ages." The mines of truth have been neglected and forgotten. The roads which lead to them have been covered up. From time to time some poet or philosopher has found stretches of the lost trail, some bits of the paths of wisdom ; but these discoverers have been as voices crying in the wilderness. Such were the Egyptian sages, the Hebrew prophets, the Greek philosophers. Such were Hermes, Isaiah, Socrates, Plato, and Zeno. Such were also Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus. Sometimes these voices have been heard in the later centuries breaking in upon the tumult of material life and proclaiming, even in the senate chamber and the market place, that there were other and surer roads to happiness than those that most men followed—that there was fabulous wealth in every soul and magical power in every life, awaiting the unfoldment of the master mind.

When we are tired of the aimless wandering in

trackless deserts, dissatisfied with the broken cisterns and mirage of purely material pleasures, we can recover the lost trail and find in the higher nature a wealth beyond the dreams of avarice, and living fountains which are inexhaustible. In this discovery alone do we find rest and peace.

When our activities are in rhythmic accord with the law of our being, disappointment and failure are impossible. Fear throws us out of step and makes us stumble. Back of fear is always selfishness.

One may safely walk over a high trestle in the dark when he cannot see the depths below him or hear the noise of the rushing river. He easily measures the regular interval between the timbers, and adjusts his step to cross it without faltering. But let the flash of a lantern reveal the distance to the eye, or the tumbling of the waters alarm the ear, and immediately the senses are thrown into confusion, and the movement becomes a matter of difficulty to the timid traveller.

When we look off from a great height upon illimitable space we sometimes feel bewildered and dazed.

An undeveloped nature would perhaps be frozen with horror if it could see into the far depths of its past and hear the rushing of the river of its life as it had swept down the channel of the ages in the long history of evolution. It would be par-

alyzed with terror if it could look into the illimitable future along the infinite line of vanishing perspective that its life will follow. It would be like the dove sent forth by Noah into the great wilderness of waters that could find no resting-place for the sole of her foot.

Light sometimes bewilders as well as darkness. The electric lantern is too dazzling for use in the lighthouses of the coast. There is danger of blinding the navigator, and making it difficult for him to judge of distances. A strong light misplaced will so deepen the shadows of a road as to exaggerate its difficulties. We stumble at fancied obstructions that are only shadows in a smooth path.

We lose the rhythm of our steps, and when we come to a real impediment we think that, too, is an illusion. Intoxication is as possible on the higher planes as on those of intellect and sense. There is such a thing as metaphysical inebriety. Its sufferers are often those who have done good work. They find themselves crippled and incapacitated, to the surprise of themselves and their pupils. This fact calls for a new diagnosis in mental pathology.

There are two classes of mind in the community: one class believes in matter, and scoffs at spirit; the other believes in spirit, and scoffs at matter. Each accuses the other of mistaking shadows for

substance, and each gives a different definition to reality. If we found that either class could walk without stumbling, we might safely choose our guides. But when they stumble alike, we must conclude that they are making similar mistakes.

Cannot we sin against matter as well as against spirit? Who can be trusted to discriminate at all times between the shadow and the substance? May it not be true that both are substance, and both shadow, at different times, and in different relations?

In the subjective realms the objective seems a dream — an unreality. It is a mistake to think that dreams and unrealities attach only to the mortal sense.

In the objective life that which relates to the subjective plane seems the unreal and undefined.

In the night the experiences of the day appear far off and vague. When we awaken in the morning we remember the night as a dream of bliss or horror.

So do we live in two worlds or states of consciousness. We cannot easily make either real while experiencing the other.

We have every reason to know that this is as true after death as before, and continues till we have gained an intelligent consciousness of our power to master life in both conditions, realizing that both are actual and true. Until we have

reached this point of understanding we are only dreamers at the best, and just as wrong when we deny the reality of matter as when we deny that of spirit.

Matter can avenge itself as well as spirit. For every atom is an individual intelligence.

The great question of life is one of poise — of equilibrium.

This is not gained with fanciful theories.

The inebriate is disturbed in his brain — the glutton in his stomach.

The temperate man compels both meat and drink to serve his wants, and maintains his balance through preserving normal circulation.

If the materialistic stomach is often out of order, so is the metaphysical head. It is unsafe for the stomach to scorn the head or the head the stomach. Neither can safely call the other a dream and an illusion, for the mucous membrane and nerve cells are very similar in both. If our philosophies are to be practical and useful we must not forget that truth is relative as well as absolute.

Ethical propositions must be shown in their right relations to the life of the individual of the present day. Truth is not complex and occult. We stumble oftenest at its simplicity. We do not properly distinguish light and shadow and so we are misled by both. Life is a constant attempt to realize ideals.

The mind of man is a crucible in which the ideal is transmuted into the real. This process of transmutation is the spiritual chemistry we are here to learn.

There is no poverty of material in the laboratory. Every individual in every hour has the opportunity of all the happiness of which he is capable through understanding of himself.

Some so-called metaphysicians begin their teachings with good basic propositions, but soon cut their ground cables and carry their pupils to the clouds, leaving them to get down again to terra firma as best they may and find their own way back to reason.

It would be well for us to begin to think of *climbing up* to the animal plane instead of talking so much of living above it.

The popular illusion concerning the real meaning of spirituality is becoming daily more apparent in metaphysical circles.

The immediate requirements of this planet earth are in the line of a higher and more perfect type of animal life in the human race. It can never be realized through a supercilious contempt for our animal functions and denial of them as illusory.

Spiritual progress implies a better understanding and appreciation of life in all its forms, a more complete adjustment of our relations to the

material world, a mastery of its forces through intelligent recognition in place of blind antagonism. The inevitable result of this is perfection of species along the lines upon which nature has always worked, and not the substitution of new methods. In this way only can we show that man is not the bond-slave of heredity.

No matter what ancestral trait has been reproduced, no matter what taint in the blood has shown itself anew, it can be wholly overcome in any individual life. It can be eradicated from the system when the soul has been aroused to its work.

Man is his own creator, and can dominate what his mind has expressed. He can change at will the colors or the texture of the thought with which he builds.

It was once customary in Jerusalem for pilgrims during the holy week to crowd about the sepulchre and wait for the appearance of the sacred fire. Every one held a taper in his hand and watched through long hours of darkness for the glimmer from the tomb. At length when it appeared those nearest to the cave would light their tapers, others kindled theirs from those of their friends, and so the flame would spread till the entire church was brilliantly illuminated.

Many had journeyed from distant lands upon the accumulated savings of a lifetime that they

might take part in this ceremony and afterward be baptized in the Jordan.

To-day there are many in America who look to the East for the sacred fire and baptism, many who believe that only in India can the highest truth be acquired. Their most cherished desire is to find the Mahatmas and sit at their feet as disciples.

As we once suffered from the disease of "An-glomania," so are we in danger now from "Hindumania." It is doubtful if any of our Hindu friends have brought us a thought that was not already known to careful students of philosophy in our western world. We are slow to recognize the fact that truth is universal and not geographical.

It is everywhere present like the ether. It pervades all life, and its right interpretation is accessible to every earnest soul. We do not find it more abundant or easily obtainable upon one day of the week than on another. Truth recognizes no special holiness in time or place, regards no era of history as sacred or profane, holds no peculiar reverence for any prophet or apostle.

Every life is in itself a voice of truth. We need not travel to India, Japan, or Palestine in our search for wisdom. There are no sacred flames or fountains except in our own souls. These are never uncovered till we are done with all our wor-

ship of the external. The inner voice speaks only in the silence when all other sounds are hushed.

When we have recognized *the ground whereon we stand* as holy ground, we are ready to hear the voice of the spirit, ready to drink of the living waters and to eat the bread that cometh down from Heaven. Every man and woman is a revelation. Every book is inspired. God is in all things and in all places. Why should we imagine such narrow limitations to Divinity? Is not this itself, as Kingsley claimed, the only atheism—to fancy that there is but one Holy Land in all the planet, one inspired volume, and one Divine Man in all the ages of humanity?

There are two lines of influence constantly operating upon every life, of which we are very apt to remain in ignorance. One comes from the unseen intelligences drawn to us by congenial thought. These find satisfaction in our atmosphere through similarity of tastes. Most of them are unknown to us as individuals. We receive the influence of their companionship, whether it be spiritual or sensual, and at the same time we exercise a certain power over them.

The other influence is that of our own thought impulses. These we have set in operation at some period far back, perhaps in former lives, and have

not yet outgrown them. No mental weakness is sloughed off, or strength developed, without intelligent recognition of our powers and fixed purpose of accomplishment. The errors of the objective life must be corrected on the objective plane,— just as the note that was drawn yesterday and made due at a fixed date and place must be redeemed,— not in our sleep, but in our waking hours.

If we have indulged in avarice, dishonesty, licentiousness, we must doubtless continue through successive lives to manifest these taints until they have filled us with disappointment and sorrow, and been finally conquered by the ascendancy of larger thought and more wholesome desire. This work cannot be done in the subjective life. We take up our unfinished tasks with each new day. When we awaken we find them awaiting us, whether we have slept well or ill— ten hours or one. We do not escape them by changing our garments. Whenever one returns to earth's vibrations he moves on the lines of least resistance, and responds most readily to the chords with which he was most familiar when he left. The time since his departure has made no change in his uncompleted task. He comes to his own atmosphere. He opens his books at the unfinished lesson. These old problems doubtless entail much suffering upon us when we again resume them. There is, perhaps, better

reason than we have supposed for the almost universal restlessness of infancy and the diseases of early childhood.

Of what are these the expression and the consequence if not of causes dating back to former incarnations? If the future is to be the result of the present, as all mankind believes, why is not the present the result of the past?

Before the returning soul has got firm hold upon its tool, the body, and gained a clear understanding of its tasks, may it not find itself uneasy and disturbed?

When we recall the distressful conditions under which many die, and the dissatisfied states of mind in which most pass out of the objective life, may it not give us a clue to many of the difficulties of our earliest years? The strong desire to solve our personal problems, which is the governing purpose of every life, brings us back to the material world sooner or later, according to the strength of the impulse within us.

The same law manifests itself in what we call spirit communication. We find that most intelligences in their first attempts to control "sensitives" or "psychics" throw upon them the mental and physical conditions under which they passed away.

This also is true without regard to the time that has elapsed since death. The returning spirit

is compelled to strike first his old keynote in matter, as a music-box starts at the point at which the tune was broken off, when it is wound up to play again.

Until we get accustomed to any particular situation we do not find much pleasure in it. This is the case in passing from the astral to the material state at birth, and equally so in passing into spirit life — Death to one condition is always birth into another.

There appears to be frequently a sense of dissatisfaction and bewilderment attending the change, whether through mortal birth or death.

Our earliest experiences upon either side are often disappointing, distasteful, and unreal, unless we have learned the science of spiritual adjustment which must be applied alike upon all planes.

Metaphysics without spiritualism is like Christianity without its gospels. Its principles cannot be clearly stated or intelligently employed. The science of metaphysics is based upon the discovery of man's spiritual powers. For this we are chiefly indebted to the reopening of communication between the seen and the unseen worlds. In these latter years it has been mainly due to the sturdy and persistent efforts of the spiritualists. It has been truly the discovery of a lost trail. The investigations of phenomena have been made with great care and thoroughness. Many of their phases have

been most indisputably established upon strictly scientific grounds and by men of recognized authority in scientific circles.

Spirit vibrations are beyond the perception of the human eye, until their rate has been reduced to that of matter. As we increase the psychic force we raise vibrations to a higher speed, making impossible the manifestation to the senses.

Much of our machinery, like the electric fan, is invisible in rapid motion. As we reduce the power, and slow down, it comes within the very narrow range of human vision.

Communication between mortal and that which we call spirit requires often the use of a medium, who serves a purpose somewhat similar to that of the electric battery in the communications of telegraphy.

Before the circuit can be established, the brain of the psychic must be quickened, and that of the spirit intelligence lowered to a point of harmony.

This is equally true upon our usual planes of life. We cannot really understand each other without some points of mental contact through currents of sympathetic vibration.

A great hindrance to the highest spiritual work to-day is the prejudice and fear which many entertain of spiritualism.

There are metaphysical teachers and healers who stubbornly refuse to recognize this source of power.

Thus, they fail of true accord with the operator at the other end of the line. Their work, in consequence, is cramped and limited. The ultimate results of such blind egotism are always disastrous.

Many who were once successful to a marked degree have been obliged to abandon their field of usefulness because of their persistent folly in denying truth that was distasteful to them. It is necessary that we should be hospitable to the whole gospel of good. There is nothing in the universe to fear and nothing of evil that can do us injury except as we make conditions possible. There is infinitely more awaiting our discovery in the mines of spiritual treasure than we have yet conceived. We must dig deep for that which is most precious. The miner often handles tons of rock in order to secure a few ounces of gold,

Objection is sometimes made to the claims of spirit communication, on the ground that it is commonplace.

While this is often true, it is one of the best evidences of the reality of the phenomena. In the ordinary interchange of thought in conversation and correspondence, do we find much that is sublime? If we were to break away from all our friends save those who made genuine contributions of real value to our intellectual life, what isolation we should suffer! Is not humanity mostly defined by "commonplace"?

We cannot claim a very high development as yet in our own phase of existence. We have no reason to suppose that any very different conditions are reached immediately by the majority of those who pass through the change of death. It does not affect one's character to leave off the clothes that he wore yesterday.

We have no reason to attribute special knowledge or power to one who has dropped his robe of flesh; nor have we any reason in that fact to decline to recognize another whose spiritual advancement makes it possible for him to render valuable assistance from the astral plane. In either case we may be seriously at fault.

If we *depend* upon the psychic rather than the spiritual faculties with which every human being is equipped, if we lean habitually upon mediums and astrologers as guides instead of using our own perceptions, we are like schoolboys in the lower forms who think they cannot recite their lessons without "cribs."

The scholar dispenses with these helps. He respects his own intelligence and makes his own researches while welcoming gladly all assistance that may be rendered by those who have the right to be called masters through superior development.

Love is the principle of power. It teaches us our intimate relations to our fellows. It identifies

us with the supreme life and wisdom, upon all planes of existence.

Love kills out the *sense of separateness* from that which is above us and below us in the scale of being. This weakness, upon which so many pride themselves, is always the mark of a narrow intellect and an unloving nature. It shows a want of the culture it affects. If we were not akin to the meanest of our fellow-men we would not find ourselves associated with them in the same school of life. It is possible we may have advanced in certain studies to a higher class than some, but as long as the experiences of humanity are necessary to us all we have no reason for exclusiveness. The pride we foster shuts us off from much that would be helpful to us. It impairs our spiritual circulation. We neither give nor receive in fulness. It is a sacrifice of power. It brings a sense of loneliness which is its penalty. We are not separated from any life in either the seen or unseen realms to which we are related by a bond of spiritual sympathy. A true recognition of the meaning of life opens to every one the gladness and freedom that belong by the right of eminent domain to every human soul.

There is no such thing as a rational melancholy. It is a purely selfish impulse. Service is its sovereign remedy.

The opportunities of life leave us without excuse

for indolence or sadness. Healthy lungs find always inspiration and expression possible in an invigorating atmosphere.

We know that our supply of air is inexhaustible, and earth's latitudes are broad enough to give us choice of any climate we prefer.

Each of us makes his own thought climate, and, if it is not satisfactory and healthful, we must look for the cause within ourselves. It is not a matter of locality. External conditions are always the expression of the inner cause. We will not find in the "beyond" the balm we seek, for all the joys of heaven cannot help a discontented mind.

True life is unutterable sweetness, in which all the shadows of our yesterdays are woven into the soft tints of the morning sunshine.

Upon the side of Mt. Blanc there is a little patch of verdure called "Le jardin." It lies in the midst of eternal snows, but in summer and winter it is always green.

In the wilds of Arabia are garden spots among the sands. The desert lies about them upon every side—a great wilderness of desolation. The little oases are always fresh and beautiful, with graceful palms and bubbling fountains. Sparkling rivulets trickle off among the tree roots, and on their borders are bright and delicate flowers.

Amid the waves of the Atlantic, hundreds of leagues from any shore, are islands of tropical

beauty. Among their orange groves and vineyards one forgets that all about him spreads an ocean that is often swept with furious gales, and breaks with savage violence on rocky shores.

In every life there is a garden spot, however cold and deep may be the snows that lie about it. In the midst of every desert there is some oasis filled with refreshing fountains.

In every sea of trouble there is some enchanted isle.

We may surround ourselves in our thought life with fruits and flowers of rare loveliness. We may find the springs of gladness bubbling up within the soul.

When we have recovered the lost trail of a spiritual purpose it leads us out of the shadows of the passing day and into the shine of the eternal years.

We no longer wander in uncertain ways oppressed with troubled thoughts, for we have found the path that leadeth unto life.

In all the time of suffering we have never been far from the right road. At any moment that we choose to yield to higher impulses we are guided quickly to the ways of peace and pleasantness. The lines of least resistance for the soul are always those of truth and righteousness.

The supreme law is supreme love.

Life is a palace — not a hovel. It has no doors that shut out happiness.

Life is a banquet — not a funeral.

We find this true when we turn up the lights.

Trouble is a dream of sense. When we awaken to real life the shadows flee away and all is well.

Death holds no terror for those who have learned the lesson of life.

When we have really discovered life's resources
we know there is no "better land" than this in
which we are unfolding realization.

We do not have to die to escape suffering.

We do not escape suffering by dying.

Spiritual science is the study of God in man;
spirit expressed in matter.

As the sun or "Sol" is to the material world,
so is "Soul" to the spiritual.

God is man's inspiration. Man is God's expres-
sion.

God is subjective man. Man is objective God.

II.

CONFIDENCE.

“ All forces have been steadily employed to complete and delight me.

Now on this spot I stand with my robust soul.” — *Walt Whitman.*

THE shadow land of failure lies always close to the sun land of success. Their provinces are curiously related. They interpenetrate each other. We cross the borderland unconsciously and do not discern the lines of separation. We are not challenged by any sentinels. We are only drawn insensibly to our own point of attraction for the passing hour by the magnetic currents into which we have allowed ourselves to drift. There is nothing more dangerous than depression and discouragement. Their tides and currents float us always to disaster. When we permit the winds to blow from a new quarter we find the clouds are quickly scattered. We easily sail away from the dark shores of foreboding and fear to lands of beauty and luxuriance.

The difference is as great as if we had exchanged the Arctic seas of the North for the aromatic forests of the South.

There is as much reality in our thought latitudes as in geographical limits.

When we have perceived this truth we do not sit down shivering by the wayside to wait for the clouds to scatter. We waste no time in sorrowing over shattered ideals, but we boldly enter a new thought land. What we have failed to discover in one country of our wanderings we diligently seek in another, until we find our largest hopes and longings satisfied. It is our spiritual geography that has been at fault. What we have desired does exist. We shall discover it when we put aside the pettiness of personal caprice and search with the devotion of King Arthur's knights in their quest of the Holy Grail.

We can best correct the imperfections in ourselves and others by constantly emphasizing ideals instead of punishing faults. We must hold steadfastly to our confidence in better things rather than weaken ourselves with thoughts of failure.

Every life is typified in the history of the race.

The individual passes through his barbaric and feudal ages and comes through "renaissance" to higher conditions, until the golden age is reached at last in his soul's development.

It has been said that mortal life is like a term at school; yet in comparison with the greater life of which it is a part, it can be only as a single hour in the class-room. It is but an incident in the existence of the immortal ego and can hardly reach the dignity of an event. Do we not greatly exag-

gerate its value and significance? Do we not needlessly exercise ourselves upon the sensations of the hour? Are they really of any greater consequence than the nursery games of children, of which in later life they have no recollection? Why should we persist in breaking our hearts over experiences which are so rapidly fading out of our horizon even while we grieve? Nothing in mortal life can possibly arrive at the importance of real tragedy.

The deepest of our sufferings are only tracings in the sands of the seashore, to be erased by the next wave of time.

In this larger view of life we find all anguish melt away. The tense conditions of our mind which have arisen from our ignorant and childish conceptions pass. We find peace in the "Everlasting Arms" which are enfolding us, and from which we can never fall away.

The birds are always singing in our heavens, the light is always shining, help is always near, and our mountains are always full of invisible hosts sent for our deliverance; yet how often we are deaf to the melodies and blind to the brightness and power because our fears have closed the avenues of spiritual perception! We sit sad and comfortless, walled in by our grief, while to every word of consolation we but shake our heads and cry, "Never was sorrow like my sorrow."

It is as important to relax our minds as it is to

concentrate them. Relaxation and concentration are opposite poles of the same mental currents. It is desirable that we understand and alternate these conditions wisely, else we shall be always either tense or scattered. Concentration is true quietness rather than intensity.

On the stage of human action we are often obliged to wait our call between the parts assigned to us. Let us learn to wait patiently and not rush upon the boards before our time, else we will unfit ourselves through our impatience for the playing of our proper part in the drama. We cannot miss our cue if we desire only to fulfil our opportunities. We should not act until the hour of action compels. We should not speak until the utterance is necessary. In the time of action we will find the open way, and in the hour of speech there will be no lack of words.

If we will learn to live without haste we will learn to live without our present urgent need of rest.

Our weariness comes from ignorance of our powers. We fear their exhaustion and suffer from perhaps unconscious protest against the demands of our occupations. We hold the expectation of reaction and fatigue. Thus our weariness results from mental friction of some sort rather than excessive activity. All haste implies anxiety and fear. Hurry is only worry under another name. It is often indulged habitually by

those who would not acknowledge themselves to be anxious.

The minutes saved by hurry are as useless as the pennies saved by parsimony.

Economies of time and money do not feed a full-grown soul.

Freedom expresses always and everywhere a sense of ever-present power to command all things. Success results from confident demand upon ourselves. We fail because our purposes are easily broken off.

When purpose and action are in harmony, they are like the united movement of the wind and tide.

A truly concentrated life promptly rejects every thought of past or future that would disturb its confidence in the present hour.

It accepts nothing that will not feed its power.

When we have planted a wheat-field or an orchard, and a blight destroys the ripening grain or a frost kills the fruit, our confidence in nature is not weakened, though our labor has ended fruitlessly. We plant again and again in confident expectation of the harvest. But when we fail in our earliest efforts to demonstrate the power of thought, and disease still clings to us, or the opulence we have sought is still delayed, we are very apt to heed our doubts and yield to our despair. Yet the fruit of thought is as well assured as that of the fields.

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Health and prosperity result from our awakening to consciousness of spiritual power. Courage is developed by necessity of action. When life is comfortable we easily lose momentum. Arrested motion transmutes energy into heat.

Inflammation, fever, and congestion are the natural results of interrupted circulation in thought-life.

As we become aroused to the higher vibrations of spirit we become indifferent to the lower vibrations of matter, knowing we can control them.

Every man is the Supreme Being of his own life. No good or evil can come to him except as he makes it possible.

Distrust of himself is only another form of vanity — a fear lest he should not fulfil his personal expectation. It forgets the infinite power upon which he can draw at will. It is as much a fault to fear a seeming weakness in ourselves as actually to manifest it outwardly.

It sometimes happens that the only debt we can pay on demand is what is called the "debt of nature," and so the weak man dies through an exaggerated consciousness of weakness. He fails to perceive the strength that he embodies, which would be sufficient if properly directed to extricate him from all his troubles.

Our fears are always premature and lead us to confusion.

Resurrection is the awakening of force. It is not through dropping our material bodies, but by obtaining true possession and control of them that we can ever realize its meaning.

When we have attained to spiritual realization our bank bills will be to us of no more value or significance than bits of paper. Deeds and stock certificates will be as worthless as old rags.

Opulence within will certainly express itself in opulence without. Spiritual power is creative and dominates all *things*. It is not dependent upon strong boxes filled with fanciful "securities." When once it has been recognized and put in motion it is always the master and never the slave of its material possessions.

The inexhaustible energies of nature are at our service when we have learned to make a confident demand upon them. We do not need so much to study the conservation of our forces and resources as the power we possess of prompt renewal. Every so-called "law" in science is manifested under prescribed conditions. If the conditions are changed there is a different result in action, and one law is transcended by another.

He who governs the conditions is the lawmaker. Thus every man becomes a law unto himself. The science of metaphysics is a study of adjustment. It is an application of common sense to

practical affairs, with confidence that we can regulate our mental attitude toward persons and events. There is in it no element of mystery. It does not require anything but the simplest intellectual effort upon natural lines.

Pessimism is like a derelict wreck at sea. It drifts without a helmsman, at the mercy of every wind and tide. Submerged below the water line, it is a menace to every brave mariner who spreads his sails to the breeze, and hangs his signal lights aloft. It is an obstruction to navigation and a danger to every craft that floats in the same sea. It rolls in the trough of the ocean a water-logged and lifeless thing against which all seamen must be warned.

We are often so bewildered by false theories on one hand and false practices on the other that our lives are complicated and ensnared. But if we are polarized in purpose we will be balanced for action.

The magnetic needle does not struggle to reach the north.

It is so well adjusted that the electric currents of the earth and air in their steady flow will swing it always toward the pole. When it vacillates through any temporary distraction they will bring it surely and speedily into line again with their persistent forces. There is no danger that it will mistake the points of the compass. Upon the stability

of this magnetic law we venture fearlessly with our fleets and navies into unknown waters. May we not have the same confidence in the soul's perceptions?

Why is our guiding principle so often deflected in life's voyage? Every wrong thought tends to depolarize it. Every hour of indulgence in false purpose or emotion turns it from its lode-star. Impatience and selfishness of every kind obstruct the equable flow of spiritual currents through the individual life.

Every doubt and fear operates to scatter them.

Absolute confidence in the eternal wisdom, love, and power of life is necessary to clear seeing and right doing.

We are impatient at every difficulty and turn the highest stimulus of life into an occasion for self-pity and discouragement. We treat adversity as an enemy when it is our truest friend. It is a demonstration of the accurate operation of the laws of cause and consequence. If we analyze intelligently we will always find a rare gem of truth imbedded in our stoniest experiences.

If we do not quickly agree with our adversity it casts us into the prison of doubt, from which we never emerge till we have paid the uttermost farthing. Nor could the soul wish us to go free till we had learned to rightly interpret the law

from which we suffered. Pain is persistent energy. It is the manifestation of life.

All our suffering comes from battles with ourselves. After we have been sufficiently bruised and beaten by the conditions we have attracted, we begin to understand the needlessness of strife.

When we are willing to feed upon the husks of our emotions and sensations we must not complain of the pangs of starvation.

True life deals with causes rather than effects. It does not concern itself with shadows. It is not interested in appearances, nor does it question how it looks to the outsider. It desires only right results. It recognizes that the shadow is illusive and misleading, and employs itself in the moulding of the substance that throws the shadow. It does not dwell on negative conditions, but on positive forces. In our reaction from the old insistence upon "doing" we emphasize the value of the silence in which we study being. But there are perils in the calm as well as in the storm. We must be careful that we do not lose our steerage way. No philosophy can be really good which leads to helplessness and inactivity.

The largest life expresses itself in largest action. Spiritual wisdom improves its purpose and method without reducing its activities. Real growth never results in indolence.

Let us roll the drum and sound the bugle note

as loud and clear as possible. But the cheer of the living hero daring all things in the charge is more inspiring than any sound of drum or bugle. Is it not better to march shoulder to shoulder in the column and keep step to the grand music of life that leads us forward than to be stragglers and grumblers in the rear? Is it not better to embody the faith that we profess and manifest it in our daily living than to show our ingenuity in criticism and our eloquence in complaints.

We think, perhaps, that we love music, and find mathematics distasteful. We respond readily to sentimental appeals, but are reluctant to meet the homely duties that demand our daily care. In reality music and mathematics are but different expressions of the same law.

Were it not for the accurate variation in the vibrations of notes and fixed counts in the rests musical chords would be impossible. Mathematics is a spiritual science — music is its rhythmic expression appealing to the emotional nature as Euclid's propositions appeal to the reason. Each is reducible to the terms of the other as sound and color, differentiated only by the number of their vibrations through which they reach the different senses in their different development.

It is difficult to say which is the greater marvel to the human mind, the diversity, or unity of life.

The science of thought is the music of life's mathematical problems. It is the fresh grouping of the notes and rests, enabling us to strike new chords.

The question of harmony or discord in any event concerning us is governed wholly by our point of view. Art and science are dependent upon careful measurements as well as on the inspiration of genius.

The simplest task, the smallest duty which falls to us, are equally important as the heroic deed. The plainest speech and action are sometimes the most essentially heroic. In life's drama the play that goes on behind the scenes is often more beautiful than that performed before the footlights to the music of the orchestra and the applause of an admiring public.

If we cannot immediately provide for those we love all that we would wish in material advantages we can at least fulfil their higher good by holding them in the kingdom of mind in which we rule in the thought of opulence and health and righteousness. Such thoughts bring their fruit as well as the labor of the hands. We need not drag our dear ones down with us into dungeons of fear. Fear results from unaccustomed situations, and the failure to apply our principles with confidence that they are sufficient to solve *all* problems.

We can no longer indulge our apprehensions when we have come to understanding.

We are always under the protection of the universal law.

It transmutes every experience into good, and our most painful hours "may be turned to beautiful results." We cannot gauge life rightly by our sensations of comfort and discomfort, except to understand that all discomfort reveals our needs. If the hand or foot were to concentrate its sensibilities upon itself with fear that it were too remote from the heart or head to share in their energies and watchful care the circulation of the arterial system would be immediately disturbed.

We know that any pain in hand or foot is instantly telegraphed to the brain, and the great central organ of the heart responds without delay to every unusual demand.

Can we not have equal confidence in the great heart and head of Being — the principle that we call God?

It is more difficult to fall than to stand, for all the laws of gravitation and mechanics combine to hold us on our feet. There is an intelligent power behind every one that is more interested in his preservation than he is himself, because it has a better understanding of his value and a purpose in expressing its own life through his.

Life continually seeks expression, and places a high value upon every opportunity.

If we could once realize the wisdom of the spirit that guides us and the force which protects us we could never again harbor a fear. All our anxieties are trivial in view of the infinite provision for our needs.

It is at the point at which we seem to stand alone in our trouble, and darkness shuts down about us, that the real test comes. We are face to face with the question, "Does law govern in my life or am I left to chance? Is the power I have thought supreme indifferent or helpless in this hour of pressing need? Shall I listen to the voice of the senses and curse God and die?"

Yet how quickly could all our difficulties be relieved from the inexhaustible resources of an infinite mind! How promptly could our vitality be quickened by the creative power we call life!

How very small are our pecuniary wants in comparison with the boundless wealth about us! How easily could our heart hunger be satisfied with some small fragments from the feast of Love!

But the misgivings linger — fears of disease, of poverty, of loneliness. The soul refuses to feed upon crusts and will not be satisfied with anything partial and incomplete. So it is shut out from everything but the springs within itself, and at length in our extremity we dig for these hidden waters.

It is in our night of agony in the garden that our angels appear. They have never been absent from our side, but sorrow rends the veil from our eyes and discloses the presence of our celestial helpers.

We find our dangers have been exaggerated because we were unconscious of our unseen allies. All our fears have vanished with the night. Joy and confidence have come with the dawn.

✓ There is no doubt that, sooner or later, every one can accomplish his desires if he will hold to them with an unvarying and persistent confidence. But as we move forward we discover better things than those we sought. We are like mountain travellers discerning always higher peaks beyond the elevations they have reached, and which could not be seen from the lower levels. ✓

We come but slowly to the recognition of our opportunities.

The largest attainments are not possible while we paralyze ourselves with doubt of our abilities. "I can do *all* things" is the voice of the higher consciousness.

Incredulity is not the sign of a superior intelligence. Faith is scientific and not superstitious. It is the result of large experience and knowledge. Its scope rightly measures the intelligence of its possessor.

A pessimistic and sceptical tone is the expression of a narrow mind and limited experience.

Atheism is a disease—a superstition. The atheist is a bigot of the crudest type. He is usually a fanatic of the violent order. Fanaticism grows always upon thin soil.

It is the ignorant mind that is suspicious. The possibilities of life are far beyond the present range of our discoveries, and every step of progress opens a grander horizon.

When the young bird first leaves its nest it can only cling to the bough on which the nest is built. It begins to stretch its wings, but has not learned its power to master the force of gravitation. A little later and the nest and bough are left behind. The bird has flown beyond the clouds. It has acquired the science of motion and command of its wings. It has gained freedom through its fearlessness.

When we have learned that we can do a thing, not because it is simple and easy in itself, but because we are strong enough to do it, the action is a delight and not an effort.

When we are confident of victory the home stretch is a pleasant one, and the winning post an easy goal.

We sometimes fancy we would like to get done with life.

Such moments of weariness and weakness come at times to most of us. Yet for every human life that passes out of the objective phase, there are thousands seeking eagerly to enter, knowing as

they do that the mortal has a rare and privileged opportunity of gaining that which is not otherwise attainable.

If we could only see our daily trials as they will appear to us a little farther on the road, we would greet them with a buoyant and boisterous welcome instead of cowering and groaning with alarm.

Does trouble challenge us to walk with it a mile? Fearlessly let us go with it twain.

Does it rudely snatch away our cloak? Let us offer it our coat also. We will never meet in life a trial that can halt us on the highway like a robber and compel us to throw up our hands unless we choose to ignore our power and yield to a force that, in the nature of things, must always be inferior to ourselves.

We are not dying of starvation but of over-feeding. Life is an embarrassment of riches. Our illnesses show that we have not been denied, but allowed too much indulgence of our follies. We have not selected our food wisely. We do not need to suffer from impoverishment in any direction if we are ready to choose that which ministers to our growth.

Life is not so cruel as to give us mouths we cannot feed or passions we cannot control. Nor does it develop aspirations that we cannot satisfy. Increasing strength of appetite develops corresponding power of government.

Hunger quickens our perceptions and leads us to nature's storehouses. Aspiration furnishes us pinions upon which we wing our way to paradise.

Every ideal can be made practical as soon it is distinctly defined, for the power to image and to execute are one and the same thing.

There is no such thing as a false hope related to the individual himself. Our hope may be imperfect, but when we have developed it into an intelligent purpose it has already entered upon fulfilment. We can sometimes judge of the character and value of the work awaiting us by the severity of the experiences we have passed in preparation for it. Are we suffering to-day? It is that we may have the wisdom needful for some suffering one whom we may help to-morrow.

After the baptism of sorrow comes the baptism of consolation. We must learn to let go of the good things in order to arrive at better things, as the tree lets go its buds that they may ripen into blossoms, and lets go the blossoms that the fruit may come.

Instead of indulging the thought "this is very trying," we should remind ourselves "this is my test and I am glad to prove my strength or discover my weakness." We need to detach ourselves from any difficult situation—to look at it apart from personal considerations—to stand outside ourselves and view the question quite dis-

passionately, as though it concerned another and were a matter of indifference to us, to put aside the present suffering with the assurance that there is balm in Gilead and the pain will quickly pass.

Our best work is often struck out in the white heat of suffering, and there comes a time when the soul understands that its choicest fruit is ripened on the tree of knowledge which grows in the garden of sorrow.

Experience deals us just the blows we need to teach us equilibrium.

The life of every day would be a pleasure if we would permit ourselves to thoroughly enjoy the work in hand.

Disease and misfortune result from habits of mind.

We cannot have a sickly body or environment without a sickly thought behind it.

Our mental attitude to-day determines our success to-morrow.

Specific gravity governs in our affairs as truly as in material science.

It carries us promptly to the plane to which our confident or anxious thoughts relate us.

The force we waste upon our fears is all that would be necessary for the achievement of our purpose.

III.

TOILING IN ROWING.

And he saw them toiling in rowing, for the wind was contrary unto them. — *Mark 6, 48.*

WHAT hard work we make of living! How we labor at the oar in our efforts to be practical and to avoid the charges of idealism and credulity!

In the twilight of Galilee the fishermen were toiling when Jesus came to them walking upon the waters. No toiling in rowing for him — for even the winds and waves obeyed him — this superb idealist. Why should not such a man sleep in the midst of the storm, knowing he could walk upon the waters! Yet the only difference between the disciple and the Master was in the larger recognition of the force which was possessed by both. It was latent in the one and active in the other.

It is easy for us to imagine that we must furnish the motive power of life.

We are slow to realize that while it is for us to decide in what direction we shall move, it is the universal energy that drives us forward.

The winds and waters never fail to serve us when we recognize ourselves as rulers. There is no gale that can blow hard enough to drive us off our course.

There are no billows high enough to wreck or drown us.

All seas are buoyant to the undaunted soul.

To destroy the sense of fear, we need to cultivate the sense of mastery. Self-control is our first lesson, and in learning this we acquire the power to put all things under our feet. *Absolute dominion* is the destiny of man.

The path is found in the humblest walks — the most common occupations of our human life. Nothing can keep us from it when the soul has made its choice. Our daily trials are our preparation, and these are often as severe as the beds of burning coals the Eastern aspirant is compelled to tread before he is accepted as a novitiate in mystic orders.

The idealist is not usually a man of affairs. He is apt to be a very faulty mathematician. Nevertheless the real purpose of life is to measure business by the golden rule — to manifest in all our dealings with each other a love that is not foolish, and an enlightened selfishness not unloving — to find a way in which the devil shall not take the hindmost, nor each man stand for himself alone.

Life is a constructive force; it does not wish to feed upon us. There is no malignant fate pursuing us; there is no power in the universe which dooms us to disaster and compels defeat.

Every energy of life is pledged to the ultimate success of every individual, to the accomplishment of his purposes, wise or foolish, if he has learned the value of decision, of persistence, and of concentrated will. The heat of the blow-pipe will quickly melt the hardest substance upon which it is steadily focussed. The lenses of the telescope serve only for the concentration of the rays of light and bring into our field of vision stars from which we are separated by inconceivable distances.

When we chain the wheels of our chariots they drag heavily.

With doubts and fears we dissipate our energies and clip the wings of Spirit.

If we listen with a mournful mind life seems to us a wail of sorrow. We do not hear the swelling undertone of love. When we are done with our complaints all voices become melodious.

Truth does not require emphasis. We state a mathematical proposition quietly.

We do not find gesture necessary in teaching history or reciting facts of which we have no doubt.

We are indifferent to all scepticism regarding our financial credit when we know it to be sound. Why should we ever be disturbed because our friends do not agree with our philosophies?

“ He who knows does not talk;
He who talks does not know.”

If in the human chorus any voice sings out of tune it is all the more necessary that we should keep to the score.

When we are distressed at the discords of those who are dear to us let us know that in the silence we can reach the higher self even while the personal is resentful and estranged.

The castle may be unapproachable, with moated walls and drawbridge raised, but a little bird can enter at its highest turret window, flying across the moat and above the closed portcullis. So can a loving thought wing itself where no word would be admitted, and where the lower nature has been barricaded by selfishness and prejudice.

All work of spiritual enlightenment is done upon the higher planes of the superconscious self. There is no stronghold tenable against the silent influence of thought. Spirit is never limited by time or circumstance.

When we are tried by those we love we can learn the ministry of angels and be to them like an arisen spirit which in its larger vision should suffer no disturbance of grief or doubt.

It sees beyond the mortal day and turns from that which is temporary to that which is eternal.

It pierces the shadows of the night with spiritual vision and sees the dawning light. It has more than hope: it has the certainty of knowledge.

It waits without impatience for the hour when the mortal shall recognize its higher self and become obedient to its voice. The soul may be bewildered in the sensual life, but it can never be really enslaved. It may be mired in the low-lands, but it is only travelling its spiral of experience and will some day come to higher grounds. Its wings will not be always folded.

“Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold.”

All life is gospel. The air is full of messages of good.

Humanity needs only to be instructed to receive and give.

The secrets of existence are not to be found by laborious seeking, but by willingness to learn and readiness to apply them.

Life opens unto all at every moment the highest good we can appropriate.

The soul always knows the road to truth when it is ready to set out upon its journey, but we must first clear up our heavy atmospheres laden with resentment and depression.

If in places the path seems steep we know it is leading more directly to the summit.

When our self-contention ceases we find ourselves at peace with all the world. It is only then that we can trust our judgment in the affairs of

life. When thought is purified it draws to itself all things and persons necessary to the solution of its problems.

Peace is not a stagnant pool: it is a deep-flowing river.

Life always vindicates its equities without our anxious care. Our interference is often an impertinence. Events are not hastened to satisfy our impatience. Justice is a universal element. It always includes mercy, even when we see only the action of what appears to be inexorable fate. The vexatious questions of to-day can be better understood if we will take them out of their present setting of time and circumstance and view them from an impersonal standpoint. They will look very different against a background of fifty years. Time will dwarf them to their true proportions. A change of venue will assist us to more just and impartial conclusions and divest them of the false lights thrown upon them by vexation and annoyance.

We cannot handle malarial fever to advantage in the swamps in which it was contracted. If we remove the patient to higher ground where he can have pure air and water the crisis is safely met, and convalescence is assured. If we raise our personal and political contentions out of the swamps of feeling in which they have been developed, we will often be surprised to find the ease

with which the difficulties solve themselves. Our relations are needlessly complicated by selfishness and obstinacy. If we will divest ourselves of petty pride we will perceive more clearly the responsibilities involved and find a quick adjustment practical.

When one's head is under water he cannot hear what is spoken in the air. These two elements of different density have different vibrations. Spiritual utterances cannot reach the ears of those who live wholly in the sensual life. They cannot perceive vibrations of the spiritual ether. Revelation is an opening of our inner vision rather than an addition to our knowledge from without. It is only when the plant has unfolded in the air and sunlight that its beautiful mysteries of form and color stand revealed. One knows but little of the true life of the body until he has begun to learn the secrets of the soul.

When an athlete desires to lift a heavy weight he finds that he needs something more than muscle and confidence in its power. He must learn to apply the muscle with intelligence, to get the right grip upon the object he wishes to raise. The wrestler cannot throw his opponent until he has grappled him in the right place; he sometimes gets this hold by yielding and letting go.

In the difficulties which present themselves to every one it is of the greatest value that we should

learn the lesson of adjustment. When we have got the right grip we can readily lift any weight that is ours to lift. We can throw any difficulty with which we have to wrestle. It is, however, important that we should not mistake our antagonist and waste our strength upon questions that do not belong to us to settle, or weights we need not raise to-day. All our work should be approached with the glad confidence of the sturdy athlete.

We will have no occasion to complain of uselessness and weakness if we do not scatter in trivial things the powers that are abundantly sufficient for any legitimate demands. The most powerful electric current if not carefully insulated will be dispersed by the induction of neighboring wires and fail of the work for which it was intended.

The clouds which gather in our heavens are often created by our own ingenious imagination, thickened and obscured by a doubtful mind. We think it is trouble that weakens and exhausts us, and makes us grow gray and old. If this be true, it is because we have not understood trouble and used it wisely. What we call trouble is really a stimulant and rejuvenator. It is the apparatus in life's gymnasium which serves to develop skill and muscle, and burns up tissues which may be perpetually renewed. It is a fundamental rule of physical culture that exercise should be continued till the muscles ache and cry for rest.

The work should be increased as rapidly as new strength will permit. We are too easily cowed by suffering, and quick to whine at all discomforts. But the measure of our difficulties is the gauge of our necessities, and we should never turn away from discipline with rueful faces.

It is not by any means the people who have had the greatest trouble that grow old the fastest. If trouble serves to arouse the higher powers of the soul it results in a sense of independence and mastery which brings strength and youth.

We should find every problem welcome and every fresh experience proportioned to the power gained by former difficulties. The divine energy that we embody will not let us rest in inactivity and stagnation. We must climb to every throne that we would occupy as we grow continually to larger recognition of our right to govern. We dig in many a field for the pearl of great price. The digging should bring us pleasure and profit quite as much as that we get from contemplation of the pearl itself. Life will not set us any task beyond our strength, nor will it ever demand of us bricks without straw.

We find no reason for unhappiness when we dismiss our apprehensions. We are too often over-confident in expectation of disaster. We are too sanguine of defeat. We overestimate our incapacity. We are too sure of failure.

When we hear suggestions of some pleasing possibility we think it "too good to be true." When disappointment comes to us it is "just what we might have expected."

Troubles are friendly tramps. We need not deal angrily with them and set the dogs on them, for if we treat them kindly they will show us many things we need to know, and cheerfully go on their way leaving blessings and not curses behind them.

Sooner or later life will give us all we want, and we will find severer lessons in satiety than in poverty.

Every truth that we encounter adds to our unhappiness until it has been accepted and embodied in our life.

A fruitful cause of dissatisfaction and unrest is an abnormal desire to please others. This often springs from personal and selfish motives unsuspected by the sufferer. He strives in vain to gain the satisfaction of recognized service and is met by coldness and indifference. If such an one would give up his subserviency, abandon his unwelcome efforts, and train himself to the indifference from which he suffers in others he would soon get satisfactory results.

We need to guard ourselves even in loving ministry against the sacrifice of individuality. It is indispensable to a true life to think from its own centres. It is not always wise to force ourselves

to look at matters from the standpoint of another. We sometimes sacrifice our judgment to affection. This can bring no good to ourselves or others. As one develops individuality he is very sure to be misunderstood by his domestic circle.

Strong individuality is like a statue carved in stone which shows fine outlines and proportions on its pedestal, but looks extremely coarse when placed upon the ground. We need the softening effects of time and distance to enable us to judge correctly of a rugged human character. Its lines do not seem delicate when closely viewed, but a greater refinement would probably weaken it for its peculiar work.

The pedestal of some special occasion raises it beyond our criticism and brings out, in grand relief, strong points that were, perhaps, offensive to us within narrower limits.

True individuality is never selfish. When we understand our real relations to the universe of which we are a part, we open ourselves fearlessly upon all sides. Our desire is to yield in matters of mere preference. We know that giving is as necessary as getting in maintaining perfect circulation. Selfishness is congestive. It contracts and shrivels all the nature; but much yielding and giving is, in reality, more selfish than withholding and denying, and demands less force of character.

Eagerness in getting health or pleasure sometimes shuts out the good that is crowding constantly upon us. We are often as selfish in the indulgence of another's eagerness as in our own. Nature is a wonderfully careful mother, and makes the way of the transgressor hard. It is no kindness to try to make it easy. If one wastes his fortune recklessly he gains in exchange the wisdom of experience, which is perhaps worth more than what has been flung away.

Nature relieves the fevered senses of the profligate with a dash of the cold water of adversity, and arouses him from his intoxication and bewilderment.

Then comes the headache of remorse — the moan of disappointment, the idle question "Is life worth living?" — which springs only from unhappiness. Life means far more than the successful conduct of our petty personal affairs or maintenance of a conventional respectability.

Our higher self has other aims for us than finding an agreeable climate and an indolent existence. It arouses us with the sharp strokes of the alarm clock of some sudden discomfort. It compels us to go out into the cold and darkness of misfortune or disease and so move on to new activities. Our days are filled with the sense of failure, and in the night vexation and regret surge in upon us like chilling winter tides. We feel the darkness overpowering. A bottomless pit yawns beneath

us. All remembrance of past joys is swallowed up in a midnight horror, and we hear only the echo of the words in our minds' corridors "He descended into hell." Heaven seems forever inaccessible.

Truly the shadows of the valley of humiliation are deeper and blacker than those of the valley of death. But the experience of these dark places seems necessary to us all.

Much of our dissatisfaction in life is due to the fact that we are not good judges of the fruit that grows on the tree in the midst of the garden — the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We do not recognize the times of ripeness. We are misled by appearances and easily mistake the day of growing for the day of gathering.

We are premature in our expectations and feel vexed and mortified to find only leaves where we have looked for fruit — not knowing that "the time of fruit is not yet." It is idle to fret at immaturity either in ourselves or others. Ages are required to perfect the animal man, and ages more to make him master of the universe. We do not realize how usefully we are related to the environment in which we find ourselves. If it be distasteful we can see in it no good. We do not understand how much we need the things that come to us, and which often are reluctantly received. We sigh for solitude while getting our best stimulus from those about us.

Every human being radiates magnetic and electric currents, and receives from others similar radiations of nervous energy. Society provides us with something more than opportunities of pleasant conversation. It relieves us of surplus force which might react uncomfortably upon ourselves. It restores to us the subtle elements we most require. We are instinctively drawn to the surroundings we need, and which enable nature to maintain in us her equilibrium.

Plants feed on the carbonic oxide thrown off by human lungs. They purify the atmosphere for the further use of man, while at the same time emitting fragrance which is soothing and delightful. Each thus ministers to the other. This principle pervades all life, and manifests itself in marvellous ways to students of natural science.

When we come to a closer analysis of what we call vibration we shall find that everything has a more extended scale than we now realize.

Nature has different vibratory rates which will appeal to all the senses when our soul perceptions are more fully awakened.

We now see color and hear sound. Other things we taste, smell, or touch without hearing and often without seeing them.

If our senses were perfected they would all be cognizant of everything in the objective life.

We would then perceive not only with one or

two or three of the five senses while the others were inactive. We would discover in everything some quality that touched a responsive chord in each. We would easily distinguish the movements of colors and sound-waves, taste their flavors and sense their touch. We would hear the harmonies of the flower-beds, the chantings of the ferns and forests. We would see the exquisite tints of musical chords, and at the same time enjoy their delicate odors. We would understand the variations of individual character from the symphonies of color radiated by the thought life. Laboratory experiments sometimes disclose rare dyes and fragrance where we had not supposed them to exist. A change of temperature in the crucible will develop strange forms and properties. The more advanced unfoldment of humanity must doubtless open new avenues of sensation. The spirit of man is all-seeing, all-hearing, all-perceiving; its intelligence is far beyond the present capacity of the senses to express.

These are imperfect avenues or points of contact between the material and astral realms, in both of which man functions.

Complete consciousness of both these planes, and intelligent direction of the will in all of his activities, is man's great problem on this planet.

Stand with me on an October day upon some high peak of the Rocky Mountain range. We

are in the midst of one of Nature's grandest amphitheatres. Encircling us are mountain-tops that are crowned with eternal snows.

Below us lies the timber line marked with dark forests of pine, spruce, and cypress. Farther down the mountain-side are groves of beech and aspen brilliant with the glory of the burning bush, while at a lower level are green meadows with the silvery threads of mountain streams woven in and out between the lines of hills.

Above this panorama hangs a canopy of deep blue sky mottled here and there with the cumulus clouds and fleecy drifts of an autumn afternoon.

A little later we may see this spectacle, illuminated by a harvest moon throwing its mysterious light over the snow crystals, forests, and meadows.

We call to mind the strains of the old prophets:

“Then shall the trees of the wood sing out.”

“The valleys shout; they also sing.”

“When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.”

If our ears were truly open now what glorious anthems we might hear! What a marvellous diapason ranging from the snow-top of the mountain to the herbage of the valley! Then would life appear indeed to us a song of power and gladness.

If we wish to train our voices to sing true we must not listen so much to discords.

We must drop our habits of criticism. We

must look for the sweet things in life and not the sour. We must gather flowers instead of nettles.

When one lives a grand, strong life we are not greatly disturbed that he is uninformed in any special field of knowledge, or even wholly illiterate and ignorant. His character in itself is a benediction which soothes, instructs, and stimulates us through the power of love.

And when another is endowed with all that makes a teacher great, except the personal demonstration of the truth he teaches, shall we not forget his personality and value that of which he is the voice? We learn from one the proposition of a principle, and in another we see the demonstration. We cannot well dispense with either, though perhaps we often find them separated. The fact that one proclaims a truth shows some appreciation of high standards, even though the teacher himself, limps painfully in his effort to follow them.

Truth is impersonal, and we can well afford to be indifferent to the channels through which it comes. If the postal service is efficient we do not quarrel with its employees, whatever may be their reputation.

We are not troubled because the pearl is found in a diseased oyster. It is a precious gem. We do not remember that ambergris is a morbid secretion derived from the bile of the whale. It is a rare fragrance.

When we are less fastidious in our demands, we will become more rapid learners. In mining for precious metals it does not disturb us to find the marks of the soil upon our working clothes and on those of our fellow-laborers. If we really seek the pearl of price we will be indifferent as to where we find it. Let us outgrow at the same time our hero-worship and censoriousness. They are alike unworthy of us. Each of us has enough to do in solving his own problems without looking over the shoulders of his neighbors to see how they are handling theirs.

Again, if we are to forgive our erring brother seventy times seven, shall we not extend the same consideration to ourselves, who possibly need it oftener?

Our greatest grief and discouragement in life is in the consciousness that we have not lived up to our ideals. Constant self-chiding is intolerable. It depresses one to the point of helplessness.

Let us give to ourselves the cheerful and tireless encouragement in the face of failure which we would give another in whose purpose and success we had entire confidence.

When we listen to the skilled players in an orchestra and our souls seem lifted up on waves of harmony it is hard to realize that every one of those musicians has struggled through many weary

hours and months of discord in the development of his artistic talent.

When we suffer from interior discord we need to hold with unflinching confidence to the belief in the power of the soul to bring us ultimately the knowledge and peace of the Divine harmonies.

It is not sufficient to tune a single string of the violin or one key of the piano. The entire instrument must be brought to concert pitch before the full power and beauty of its tone can be expressed.

But let us enjoy and not quarrel with the tuning process in thought of the grand chords which we are making possible.

Discord destroys an instrument that will not yield itself to harmony. Nature will not tolerate an instrument it cannot tune. The whole philosophy of mental healing lies in the recovery of a lost chord. The operation of this principle is shown in the domestic circle and community. Discord disintegrates. It is a centrifugal force. Harmony is centripetal and blends. The home or nation that does not develop harmony within itself cannot be long maintained. Life hews to the line, regardless of where the chips may fall. Its standard is perfection. It will recognize no other law in *any* of its kingdoms than the survival of the fittest. Extinction is the penalty of disobedience.

Some of us live in prisons of fear. These are

the true torture chambers of the Inquisition. Fear is the grand inquisitor who applies to us continually the rack, the thumbscrew, and the firebrand.

Some of us abide in cemeteries amid the tombs of memory, and are continually bringing garlands to the graves of our dead past. Some of us are cave-dwellers living on the lowest planes of animal existence and in the jungles of a merely sensual life.

But to all of us come the voices of the spirit bidding us come out of our mental prisons, out of our chambers of horror, out of our caves and dungeons, into the glad freedom of true life, to leave the fever districts of the plains and climb the mountain-side, to leave the shadows of the valley and seek the sunlight of the hills, to leave the stagnant waters and come to living fountains.

Thus shall we indeed "go out with joy and be led forth with peace while the mountains and the hills break forth before us into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

An intuitional nature that violates its spiritual impulses renders itself peculiarly liable to disease and suffering.

At the point of discouragement we are often
nearest accomplishment.

If we weather this cape we find the storm is
over and the port in sight.

It is a scattering and waste of force to lament
and criticize what we cannot help.

IV.

PATIENCE.

Everything must be taken genially, and we must be at the top of our condition to understand anything rightly.

— *Emerson.*

The most unhappy man in the world is he that is not patient in adversity, for men are not killed with the adversity they have to bear, but with the impatience which they suffer.
— *Chas. Bailly, 1571.*

MORE than three hundred years ago these words that we have quoted of Charles Bailly's were cut by him into the walls of his cell, in London Tower, where he was confined as a political offender, awaiting death. Here is mental science, pure and simple, in a grander memorial inscription than is carved upon the walls of any church or temple of our day. How little the prisoner thought, as he patiently scratched these lines upon the stones of his dungeon, that three centuries afterward a new world would awaken to their truth and make it the cornerstone of metaphysics!

We have been so long accustomed to thinking of ourselves as the helpless victims of heredity and circumstance that when we begin to realize we are only the victims of our own impatient and

ignorant will, we enter indeed upon a new psychology.

How different a landscape looks when approached from a new point of view! So changed that in returning over a road which we passed for the first time but an hour before, we scarcely recognize it as one we have travelled. Every field and tree, every curve and angle, presents itself in an entirely new relation to the whole.

So in our view of any truth: when we have changed its setting we get a different perspective.

In the attainment of spiritual freedom we are loosed at the same time from fear and desire. It is either the fear or the desire of change that produces our discomfort. It is this that compels the passage of the soul from the objective to the subjective life through death, and brings it again from the subjective to the objective existence at birth.

Before we can control and overcome all fixity of condition, and be able to enter and abide with equal ease and pleasure upon any plane, we must not only complete the education of the will, but must acquire perfect satisfaction through a larger knowledge of life's meaning, and a larger confidence in its purposes.

The new term of "polarization" and the old term of "atonement" mean one and the same thing; the harmonizing of man's personal and mortal

nature with his impersonal and spiritual self; the bringing of every thought into ready subjection to the higher impulse. This is self-government by the immortal ego—the finding of the Christ within.

If we understand that Supreme love never fail-
eth, we know that its unwavering desire is for our highest good. This remains true whether we define our ideal as a personal God, as absolute law, or as the potent and individual ego related to the infinite whole.

Its constant action is for the establishment of equilibrium.

It is as plainly seen in the life of man as in the earthquake and the tornado. All phenomena are the expressions of this law of equilibrium. All the strangeness of human fate is equally a manifestation of the same power in human life. Pride must have its fall as surely as a tree that has grown top-heavy. Every virtue becomes a vice in its extremity and reacts with the ultimate result of greater symmetry of character.

It is very evident in all the work of modern healing that the vital principle effects a change of the impatient and discouraged thought.

A conviction is aroused that health is possible and probable.

It may come to the mind through faith in the Virgin Mary or some of the saints of the church,

through faith in prayer, in a hypnotic operator, or in the assurances of Christian Science and metaphysics.

Healers of diverse theories and hostile camps are equally successful in their application of thought principles, and the faith of either the healer or the healed is the principle always present.

If one school can fairly claim that its theories are justified by works, so can they all, though they be aliens and heretics to one another, and their definitions and methods radically differ. In all of them we find the common factor — faith — producing expectation of health, and changing mental conditions from negative to positive. It seems to make no difference in the results whether the faith is focused on an amulet, a shrine, a person, or a book.

The healing principle is a positive thought, and anything that can arouse this to vigorous action will obtain results. The spirit which is behind every life and seeking continually larger experience in its human form is positive in character and pure in purpose, however imperfect may be its manifestation.

Sooner or later the human soul will recognize the truth of its divine origin and guidance. Nothing is gained by forcing its development. It must be educated to choose righteousness for itself.

With growth of knowledge comes right choice;

for no one will deliberately invest his energies in lines that lead to bankruptcy.

With choice comes power of accomplishment. All life tends to progress, and every power in the universe is aiming to secure the best results for all. In the perfected truth we find the seed. Within the seed we find the essence and the promise of the fruit. Seed and fruit are inseparably united. Together they complete the circle of being, though the arc lines of development are often immeasurable to human observation.

It is doubtful, after all, if the metaphysical or religious healer is often anything more than the doctor's boy who carries around the medicine-case and delivers the prescription prepared by wiser intelligences in the unseen.

May it not be true that such greater ones sometimes discern the needs of our humanity better than we, provide the healing power, and bring together the healer and the sufferer — indifferent to the label of the cure? It flatters our petty vanities to believe that "we are the people, and wisdom shall die with us." But how shall we explain the good work that is done by those who have no sympathy in our peculiar views? Does it not appear that there is sometimes but small relation between theory and practice, and there may be other elements in life than those that we have catalogued in our intellectual laboratories. Perhaps many are

fitting themselves to be the real healers of the future, while now only playing doctor, and distributing the remedies arranged by others.

But there is abundant reason for confidence in those others, and we need never distrust their wisdom and skill in any case to which they summon us as helpers, if we are really working on the highest lines.

It is not necessary that healer or patient should be sensible of the effect of any particular treatment. The finer forces of nature do not appeal to the senses. They work below the surface of life and develop plant growth in darkened cells beneath the ground. All our forces are spiritual. The senses are only organs or tools through which we come in touch with matter. They are like the duplex wires of telegraphy over which we send and receive soul messages on the objective plane. We should never lose sight of the fact that it is the soul that stands at the transmitter and receiver, and at all times is the operator. It is the soul that sees, hears, feels, tastes, and smells. If any defect appear in the instrument or any obstruction in the circuit we must call upon the soul to repair the damage and to remove the difficulty. Its resources of intelligence and power are always equal to the task. It can summon all necessary aid. It is its business to maintain an equilibrium of forces, that inspiration and expression may compensate each other always.

The fountain of life is perennial. It is impossible to choke the spring. Through all the overlying rubbish that our passions and sensuality have heaped upon it it still bubbles up and makes for itself an open channel, whether in the rock or marsh-lands. Ever will its waters find the sea, refreshing every pasture through which they flow.

As the spiritual principle gains ascendancy the objective life is permeated more and more by the subjective. Life shows more of inspiration and less of trance conditions. We require less sleep and a lessened degree of torpor in the night hours, while our different mental states approach each other. Our minds are more active in repose and more tranquil in activity.

Highly developed spiritual natures scarcely require the refreshment of unconscious sleep. The range of spiritual activity is widened and less interrupted as the two conditions blend. We will ultimately find the positive force of spiritual will asserting itself over all negative states.

When one is wakeful at night he is impatient in his restlessness and struggles for sleep.

If he would only accept the insomnia with cheerfulness it would bring no bad results, and would the sooner pass away.

Insomnia often opens the doors of a spiritual night school, in which we may obtain many a val-

uable revelation if we will only listen patiently. In our activities of the day our spiritual faculties are often dulled. In the quiet hours of the night the subjective side of nature is presented to us with many lessons that are well worth the hours of wakefulness they cost, for they bring spiritual tonics with them more refreshing than the ordinary slumbers.

If we are not responsible for the thoughts that pass our doors we are at least responsible for those that we admit and entertain.

Every hour of true thought holds the entire nature to its keynote and silently works its good even in unconsciousness. Every hour of wrong thinking brings disintegration and confusion. These healing or hurtful processes are in continuous operation. Sooner or later they will manifest results in the external, in both body and surroundings.

No one is shut out from the tuneful melodies of life except by his own choice. Wherever his lot is cast he is within the province of harmonious law.

Many suffer from excessive culture and refinement. They lack sinew and fibre and have forgotten the meaning of the words "robust" and "stalwart." They are sickly, sensational, and sentimental. It is a secret gratification to believe their symptoms are so delicate and subtle as to baffle the physicians and be classed as "peculiar"

and "unusual." Their real difficulty is selfishness, though such a diagnosis would sound coarse and offensive to their sensitive ears. They need the bitter tonics of honest truth, but prefer the sweets that have already cloyed their stomachs and obstructed their digestion. A good, sound mental shock would bring them to a rallying-point and be of greater benefit than an electric current or a change of climate. Adversity would often prove their very best friend.

Nervous prostration is not a common disease among the poorer classes. It is a luxury beyond their purse, like grand opera or foreign travel. It belongs peculiarly to those whom Emerson describes as having gone to sleep upon the cushion of advantages, and has lately been named "nervous prosperity."

The arousing of the soul is an infallible remedy.

We often complain severely of others, to conceal our dissatisfaction with ourselves.

It is usually ourselves that we are secretly upbraiding while condemning others, and if our peace of mind could be restored we would find but little difficulty in approving or excusing those in whom we have found the greatest fault.

We may cheerfully note it as a sign of progress when we have got beyond the point of wishing to defend ourselves.

When we have admitted our own responsibility

for a fault we have taken the first step toward its correction and brushed aside many difficulties from our path.

The faults we criticise are usually our own, though we may imagine ourselves particularly exempt from them. The breach in our own intrenchments is generally at the point at which we most quickly perceive the weakness of others.

The old French proverb is universally true—"Whosoever excuses himself accuses himself." We are not easily sensitive to accusations we know to be false.

Let us be willing to be misunderstood, to be even silenced in an argument, rather than insist to the point of irritation and prolong dispute.

Why should we care to maintain our position so tenaciously and explain our personal views?

Truth does not need us for her champion. She is no weakling and is indifferent to our espousal of her cause.

Our only real concern should be to stand right in the opinion and judgment of our own soul.

Let no word be spoken in the home that we would wish recalled when we look into the grave of any of our loved ones. The bitterness of such a recollection in that hour adds unutterable anguish to bereavement.

We may be very sure that we can paint no daub upon the canvas of our life which our own

eyes will not have to contemplate some day from the standpoint of a higher knowledge of the harmony of color and the art of living. We must suffer keenly from this post-mortem study and toil painfully till we have painted out the sad discoloring and worked our highest standards into the living canvas.

There will come a time to all of us when every unkind word and every cruel thought will be a sounding echo in the corridors of memory, where every selfish soul shall walk alone and desolate, unable to shut out the voices of its past, which bring to it a more exquisite torture than was ever pictured in the hells of Dante's "Purgatorio."

Patience and indifference are of the greatest value in the correction of disturbed conditions. We know that mental exaltation will render one insensible to pain, and many seek and apply it as they would an opiate. But while it may be temporarily useful it has secondary effects that leave conditions of unrest. It is equally true in metaphysics as in physics that "action and reaction are equal and in opposite directions."

The almost inevitable consequence of times of "uplifting" is a most serious downfalling. The mental pendulum swings back to its completion of the arc upon the opposite side. When Moses comes down from Sinai he breaks the tablets of the law in his impatience at the unexpected idol-

atry of his people. At the foot of the mountain of Transfiguration Jesus is roused to a severe rebuke of the disciples who have been trying to do good work in his absence, but have failed in their attempt. Musicians are often quarrelsome in spite of the fact that their constant employment is the production of harmony.

Spiritualists are often deeply sorrowful at the death of friends, notwithstanding their confidence in continued communion.

Metaphysicians are often filled with anxious thought in the midst of their warfare against worry. The most reasonable solution of these mysteries lies in the analysis of the emotions.

Through the dangerous indulgence of elation we involve ourselves in discords of depression. The old hymn aptly expressed the feeling common to all when on the unaccustomed mountain-top :

“ Oh, could my soul but stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing itself away
To everlasting bliss.”

But we feel we cannot remain in the higher altitudes. At the same time we resent the necessity of the ordinary duties and associations of life which seem to demand of us a certain condescension. This is a mistaken view; the fault is in our estimate of the value of the ecstasy. Emotional states are

necessarily transient and dangerous. Truly spiritual conditions are abiding and imperishable. There are breezy uplands where the atmospheres are always clear, and the sunlight perpetually radiant.

✓ We attain to these states only when we climb by paths of principle, and not through the experience of the emotions. They are reached as well through the busiest and most commonplace activities of life as in the seclusion of the scholar and recluse. They are superior to all environment and suffer no reactions. They are indifferent to sensation because confident of results.

This power is found in the complete recognition of the greater self. It regards the personal or lesser self as a student and pupil. When it suffers it comforts this "*alter ego*" with the reassurance of its ability to overcome all pain through knowledge rather than through rapture.

It teaches the lesser self to say, "I desire this experience to continue till I have learned its lesson. I cheerfully consent to any price that life demands for wisdom."

Our best lessons are often learned when suffering reveals us to ourselves. Should we not then make friends with our troubles, instead of angrily despising them?

Let us bid them do their will upon us—not defiantly, but with honest purpose of learning the

power of spirit to destroy pain. Give the thumb-screws another turn, O Life, and I will find within myself a stronger force than anguish. I will not be a slave to suffering. I will not evade by flight, but I will say of truth, "Though it slay me yet will I trust in it," and from the anguish will be born a peace that is abiding and makes suffering henceforth impossible.

When we indulge impatience we produce disturbed conditions of the soul. Our higher self knows the repose of infinite peace, while the mortal feels only the difficulty of its attainment.

The higher self is as the ocean rolling its great tides outward, while the personal self is as the wind blowing shoreward; and so the surface of the life is agitated and we suffer from the conflict of wind and tide.

When we bring these forces into consonant action they will manifest a boundless power.

Mere theories will not heal life's troubles. It is only by doing the will of the greater self that we can know the true doctrine of peace and power. We can never learn to swim by clinging with one hand to the shore. We can never be rid of our difficulties as long as we insist on tightly clutching and constantly reviewing them. It is as if we should open an old sore to see if it were healing. We must *let go* of the intense and selfish thought. In the miracles of healing, which are so often reported by

the Roman Catholic Church, it is noticeable that the mind of the devotee has been first prepared by turning the thought away from his own sufferings to those of another. In a partial transcript of an offer of indulgence copied from the walls of a cathedral we find the following:

“A partial indulgence may be gained by reciting before this cross with sorrowful heart seven times the Hail Mary in honor of the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin;” and again the same, “in honor of the sacred wounds of our Lord.” The soul of the suppliant is thus first confirmed in patience, and then exercised in adoration and led to expect with confidence the healing which so often follows its devotions.

The emotional and sensual natures are closely allied.

Spiritual life manifests a higher purpose and power than are shown in self-indulgence.

The real value of any position of responsibility is in its opportunities of service rather than of gain.

Until we have learned this truth we are not fitted for large work in positions of trust and influence. Selfishness narrows the horizon, paralyzes action, and neutralizes energy. “Service” is the word of power and healing, and it is always certain that “He that *looseth* his life shall find it.”

We cannot help or hinder another *except with his consent*.

This may be given perhaps unconsciously and through a state of mind which has become receptive, not as the result of deliberate choice so much as from an habitual tendency, as a heroic mind is open always to heroic impulses even when unconsciously conveyed. Marconi's electric currents are projected as waves or radiations and their positive motion registered upon a sensitive receiver.

If the receiver were not adapted to the current it would be unaffected by it and remain inert. The mind that is not sensitized to evil cannot be influenced by evil thought.

The mind that is not accustomed to good cannot receive good thought.

"To him that hath is given" — simply for the reason that such are most receptive.

Power and sensibility are always joined. We have commonly imagined them divorced. Sensitiveness is no right plea for weakness.

The strongest forces are the most subtle and insidious.

The rankest poisons are often the most inodorous. The most rapid agencies are silent ones.

Insulation is an important factor in laboratory work.

This is equally true in the work of a mental healer. A certain mental insulation of the patient is always necessary.

When a single current would work good results

diverse currents of different rates through different healers are apt to bring confusion and injury to the patient. It is a molecular bombardment of mixed forces. Patience is a most important factor in the accomplishment of mental cures. The truly scientific mind is never impatient. It moves with boldness, deliberation, and confidence.

Many an invalid who has suffered from physicians for months and years, until driven to try as a last alternative a course of mental treatment, impatiently protests against the least delay if positive results are not immediately obtained,

He forgets that often a new growth must be established and developed in the diseased organs, and that nature sometimes does this work in the unseen a long time before a change is manifested at the surface. Doubtless much real good in mental work is sacrificed by the impatience of the sufferer. Actual results are often silently accomplished, but have not yet appeared when the invalid decides to try another healer or to abandon altogether what to him is only an experiment.

If we realized more intelligently the nature of thought we would feel positive assurance of its work as we do of the seed when we have buried it and watered it without a doubt of its finding its way above the ground. We are content to wait for it to grow. Every thought will surely find its

proper soil, will root itself, and bear its fruit whether of good or evil.

Thought flies always straight to its mark. It is more intelligent than bird or bee, and finds its destination with greater ease. We need not fear it will miscarry. It may remain a long time in the aura of an individual, and gain entrance only when his armor is loosened.

When we are open to good influences they always find their way to us.

When we choose the lower impulses they fasten themselves upon us and feed on our vitality like parasites.

We are not teachable as long as we are vexed by criticism.

Patience is an element of both power and freedom.

Doubts produce impatience and are non-conductors of spiritual currents. Knowledge comes through patient listening to the voice of the Greater Self. Concentration is confidence.

That for which we anxiously strive with too earnest endeavor often brings the least result, and if at last attained, the usual consequence is disappointment.

Nature embodies in a drop of dew the same force it expresses in a cloud-burst or tornado. Yet the one nourishes and the others destroy.

When we are in harmony with life through a right purpose, its vigorous energies find expression

through us without effort. What we gain through strife seldom proves of value, and often we find that the obstacle we have crushed was a safeguard against suffering. If we have broken it down by our impatience we have opened an avenue of pain.

But even in such experience we prove our need of the trouble we precipitated by our rashness. Like children, we have cried and struggled for the candy that has made us ill, but through the illness we may learn a lesson and develop greater strength.

If the sweets had contained a poison that was fatal we would have found them unattainable. The barriers would not have given way and we would have been defeated in our purpose.

Life is kinder to us than we know. She would be far gentler still if we ourselves permitted it. We compel her often to use force to hold us back from self-destruction. Of force she has unlimited command. Her mighty powers we have never gauged.

The very snowflake which falls so gently and looks so white and peaceful holds greater energies than any we have yet developed in our most powerful explosives.

Nature confers her favors only on her friends. While we distrust life at any point we cannot fully learn its secrets or its joys. Faith must needs be *L* recognized as the normal action of the human mind; not faith in ecclesiastical dogma or scienc-

tific theory, but faith in the goodness of life itself, — in its high possibilities and powers. These are revealed only to those who listen trustfully to the voice of the soul.

In dealing with the question of intellect we are sometimes in danger of false distinctions and arbitrary definitions.

Spirit can be nothing less than intellectual, and intellect rightly instructed can be nothing less than spiritual. The very meaning of the word is "understanding."

A truly educated intellect can never be a stumbling-block to spiritual advancement. It is, on the contrary, essential to the highest spiritual perceptions.

Intuition is only instantaneous reason, and sooner or later it can always give of itself a rational justification.

There can be no such thing as "pride of intellect," because an enlightened intelligence must have outgrown pride. All pride is ignorance and marks the absence of illumination. It is not a taint of intellectual development, but shows the lack of it. One who is truly intellectual never shows impatience at the want of education in another, nor does he insist upon the absolute correctness of his own opinions, knowing well that in the journey he has travelled his point of view has often changed, and that it will doubtless change again.

We set out upon the road with the reckless gladness of childhood. We never doubt that the world was made for us. It is truly our oyster and we are to open it. We proceed merrily with our task, and at first all things give way to us.

Later on we burden ourselves with accumulations. We involve ourselves, through our ambitions, in endless complications and perplexities.

We even believe this necessary to the increasing responsibilities of life, and sigh hopelessly sometimes for the simplicity of the earlier years. What is the nature of the load under which our shoulders stoop and the hair turns gray? Will we dare examine the pack we carry? Is it not weighted with unnecessary things, such as regrets and griefs at our disillusionments?

Are we calling ourselves failures and sorrowing for neglected opportunities? Are we sore at the recollection of injustice we have suffered and blaming others for our troubles? Are we burdened with despondency which turns our eyes backward and dims our vision to the beauties of the road that we are travelling? Or are we, in a fever of anticipation, straining our sight to look forward and hurrying our steps in impatience and restlessness to reach an uncertain goal?

Are we embarrassed with anxieties for others, forgetting that each life is secure in its own orbit even though we may not understand its course?

If our suffering has come through any of these causes it will quickly pass when we have recognized our own and others true relation to the universe.

There is a Chinese padlock which opens only to the spelling of a name to which its wards are fitted.

Every difficulty we encounter has some key which will unlock it when we have discovered the right word and learned to fit it to its place. It may be "Trust," "Persistence," "Confidence," or "Gladness."

The joy bells are always ringing. If our hearing has been dulled by the tensity of selfishness their sweet chimes will not reach us till we have unstopped our ears and let go of our sorrows. Patience has not had her perfect work until we have become indifferent to trouble and vexation. From this point we go forward fearlessly, assured of a complete and early conquest.

We can cheerfully submit to anything we think will bring us good.

If we are thoroughly assured that life is governed in every detail by beneficent law we quickly find that all its processes are painless and enjoyable.

Its gravest trial then becomes "the light affliction which is but for a moment."

All impatience disturbs the circulation, scatters force, and makes concentration difficult if not impossible.

We may be sure there is deliverance from every unfavorable condition of our lives when we have fitted ourselves to accept it.

It is useless to try to get rid of suffering before we have learned its lesson. Life moves with accurate precision upon the lines that we make necessary.

All the doors of life are inscribed "Pull." They open inward toward the individual himself; and yet we often read amiss, and think they are marked "Push."

We do not estimate at its true value the magnetic power of thought, which *draws* to us what we confidently seek, if we only fix the centre of attraction and hold it steadily to its work.

V.

MASTER MARINERS.

COAST NOTES.

“Blow the wind East or blow it West,
Whichever wind blows is the best.”

“I count it kinglier far to wait,
Aye, wait and wait a thousand years,
Than once to doubt or challenge fate.”

— *Joaquin Miller.*

The evolution of the spiritual man is simply the education of a navigator.

The boy who takes his toy ship to the pond will set its little rudder to counteract the wind that is blowing, and launch it without a pilot on its mimic voyage.

If the wind doesn’t change, his venture moves directly toward the other bank, but otherwise it is the sport of breeze and current — blown hither and thither until it drifts ashore.

If a living pilot were aboard he could shape its course intelligently, and make a prosperous voyage in the face of any and all winds.

An undeveloped man who has not learned to grasp the helm of his being, and direct its course

with distinct purpose and skill, is drifting on the sea of life.

When he awakens to this discovery his first impulse is to place himself in tow of some stronger and wiser intelligence than his own. This is well if his aim be self-development and independent navigation. But many who are enrolled as disciples of metaphysics are content to sail so long as the water is smooth and the breezes suit them. As soon as the sea roughens or the wind veers, their seamanship is all at fault, and they signal for a pilot.

What would be thought of the navigator who could never loosen his canvas in open water, but was dependent on the tug master to tow him across the seas; or who would steer for port in every change of weather?

We need to learn that there are no adverse winds to the able seaman. He makes every gust to serve him. He does not expect to make his voyage with the breeze "dead aft." He is even content to meet it sometimes "dead ahead," and shorten sail or lie "head on" to the great seas and let it blow, knowing that in a few hours it will shift to a more favorable quarter. He may gain but a single mile upon his course in a whole day's sailing. Yet that mile is as truly a part of his voyage as the two or three hundred that he clears another day. All these exigencies were taken into

consideration and provided for before he left the shelter of the bay. He knew he would meet stormy winds and tempestuous seas, but also knew his seamanship was competent to bring him safely through them, and that every voyage would develop larger knowledge through experience.

There is no trouble that can come to us but carries with it food for spiritual life.

There is no cloud, however black, that hangs above us but is charged with light that can illuminate the darkest passes of our journey.

We must transmute the suffering and draw the lightning.

We can turn the baser metals into gold, and charge electric batteries with the force of thunderbolts.

We are divine alchemists. Our laboratory is perfectly equipped with heat and light and power.

Let us forget our anxieties and employ ourselves with the study and direction of the tremendous forces which course through us.

Let us leave the little personal man outside and not allow ourselves to be bothered with his complaints. He can come in when he gets ready, share our experiments, and enjoy our satisfaction. There is a door always open, and he can find it when he will. Why should we weary ourselves with his lamentations?

What cares the scientist for the direction of the

weather-vane when he is busy with his retorts and crucibles — absorbed with the study and development of nature's energies — which he controls at will !

When a beam of the eternal day has flashed across one's path his most grievous trouble becomes trifling, and shrinks into such insignificance that he ceases to question his soul regarding suffering. No thought of self-pity or injustice can perplex him in that noonday light. His head is above the clouds — above the swirl of waters that seemed so threatening before. The winds are no longer boisterous.

When this light has really dawned upon the consciousness, the present and future are absorbed in it. It is the one great reality of existence. It blends all experiences in complete harmony. One no longer seeks sleep or death as a refuge from sorrows, for pain has passed like a mist that has rolled away before the sun of the morning. Humanity has recognized its destiny, and looks enraptured like a toil-worn traveller who gazes from a lofty summit upon the glory of a landscape that transcends his most confident expectations and surpasses his most daring imagination.

Know that death is not the only gateway through which we reach this realization. It may come through pain or pleasure in the hour of

struggle or of stillness. But in that moment one is born again. He steps beyond all thought or care of suffering forever. Pain and pleasure are alike swallowed up in the superb sense of being.

The King has come to his own.

It is always ours to choose upon what seas we will embark, and to what winds we will trim our sails.

Having made the choice, we find our only effort is to hold ourselves in accord with the tides and currents that bear us onward. We have become a part of their life, and our relation to them is governed by ourselves.

We do not realize the uses of ebb tides in the affairs of men. In the diurnal movements of the sea the flood comes in and carries the rubbish high upon the shore, where it is disinfected by the sun. The ebb tide sweeps the sands clean, carrying out the waste to be buried in the ocean depths. The petty disorders of the beach are quickly washed away. So man is cleansed and healed by both the flood tides and the ebb, in his varying experiences of prosperity and adversity.

Let him not be impatient at low tide. The waves will bring back what they floated away. They will cast it again at his feet cleansed and freshened by the deep waters.

The best ships look uncouth and useless when stranded upon dry sands, but when the sea comes

tumbling in again they are soon afloat and pulling at their hawsers as if impatient for another voyage. The tides have brought to them new life and opportunity. The waiting is ended, for the ebb is passed.

When the tides serve we may launch our ventures, but waiting is often the part of wisdom, and we should wait with patience.

Life has its light-towers upon all headlands.

Every reef is marked by its lightships and bell-buoys.

It has its signal circuits so established that we cannot break their currents without the sounding of alarm bells.

This is proved on every plane of human activity. If we swerve to the least degree from our proper channel that very instant do we put in motion cause of suffering. The longer we hold upon the mistaken course the more the pain is deepened.

Persistence in error brings us to the shoals on which our life craft will be wrecked. A new ship will be necessary before we can resume our voyage. It is well to heed our earliest warnings if we wish smooth passages.

An engineer watches his steam and water gauges and maintains them at the proper level for the highest power. He can easily know when the steam in his boilers is getting low and the water too high.

The remedy is in the fuel pile, and, opening the furnace doors, he feeds the fires afresh while the machinery moves with a new vigor.

The officer of the weather bureau, from his tower, studies his instruments that show the action of wind and weather, and from his signal staff he flies the warning of cold waves and hurricanes.

It is very necessary for us to note storm signals in ourselves and one another, and govern our days accordingly.

We must study carefully the soul forces within us in order to control and direct their energies, must feed our fires and keep our gauges clean.

There is never lack of energy. Our work is to direct its application wisely to our own requirements. We are often impatient for the immediate solution of the entire problem. If we will quietly content ourselves with the occupation of the day, applying thoroughly the few principles of life's arithmetic we have acquired to the arrangement of the factors in our hands, we will oftener be pleasantly surprised than disappointed with results.

Our sailing will bring us more frequently into smooth waters than rough ones. The simple tables of spiritual logarithms provide us with all that we require for our mortal navigation.

We have scarcely embarked as yet upon the great sea of Truth. We are only dropping down

the bay. It will be some time before we feel the ground-swell of the ocean under us, and begin to realize that we are "off soundings."

The most serious work that we have yet attempted is only coasting in sight of shore. Before we can safely navigate the open sea we must learn to command and obey.

The troubles of to-day are not those that most disturb us, but the troubles of to-morrow.

We feel equal to the struggle of the present moment, but are distressed at the thought of that which looms upon the horizon of the future — that which is just swinging across the range of our perspective and stands between us and the sun, making twilight of the noonday and chilling our blood with fear. It is the gathering storm that most affrights us.

To forestall the duty of any hour is as undesirable as to neglect it when it comes.

Prematurity is as dangerous a disease as procrastination, and often far more costly in time and treasure. Every responsibility arrives with its attendant factors and environment. These cannot be properly combined in any other hour than that to which they belong. Let us revise the old proverb and know

There is *never* a slip
'Twixt the cup and the lip
For which fate intends it.

It is not always possible to trace the connection between cause and consequence in any particular experience, but we may be always sure the cause lies hidden in ourselves. As we work upon this principle we find our understanding and discernment grow more accurate with every day.

Sometimes cause and consequence lie so close together that we have no difficulty in perceiving the straight line connecting them.

Sometimes the cause lies hidden in a remote event or impulse which was indulged long ago and has been long forgotten.

Sometimes it dates back to weaknesses we thought we had outgrown and which have made no sign for many years. Some unusual event has waked up slumbering sensations and put them again in evidence, to our most serious discomfort and chagrin. Perhaps we say, "I have been really tranquil, yet this trouble comes."

No crop is ever grown except from seed, but seed may lie long buried in the ground and manifest its dormant power of fruitfulness in some quite unexpected conditions of heat or moisture. A man in middle age who has acquired unusual self-possession may suffer from head troubles that are the result of early tempers. In a time when negative conditions prevail over the positive the seed of this old weakness will germinate and show itself in symptoms that may baffle the physicians.

Some poisons work more speedily than others. Some may remain latent and unsuspected in the system through long periods of time.

The suffering and sorrow of to-day may be the ripened fruit of yesterday's sowing, or many harvests may have been gathered since the seed of this particular experience was planted.

And yet we need not fear a lurking evil after we have diligently sought its root and used the knife of mental surgery with an unfaltering purpose. If suffering continues we may know that we have spared some nerve or tendon that should have been cut away or left some grain of poison in the system that needs to be expelled. Spiritual cleansing must be thorough and heroic if we wish it to be effectual.

The crimson and scarlet must be made as white as snow. This is always within our power if it is within our purpose.

There is no virtue but may become exaggerated and distorted. When it becomes so pronounced as to cause self-complacency in the mind of its possessor it has passed the line of equilibrium and reached this stage.

The faintest trace of pride in any virtuous characteristic marks decay, and shows a vicious tendency, for pride and self-complacency find lodgment only in an unsound mind.

What we are governs what we believe. "Be-

lief" does not govern life. It is the expression of being. It comes from within, and is the indication of the point of development that has been reached.

Character is the growth of that which we call "trouble," as the trunk of the forest tree is fed by the mould of its dead leaves lying about its roots. It seems to part reluctantly with the summer foliage, which has been its glory, and which the autumn winds tear from its branches till they are stripped and bare; yet through this very process the way is prepared for a new and larger growth when the next spring comes round. So even the old treasures have a part in the new glory which has been made possible by their death. We must needs let go of the old life to make a larger and better experience possible.

When we make our happiness dependent upon persons, things, and places, the conditions are beyond our control, and we are subject to many alternations of hope and sorrow.

When we assume the entire responsibility, and look for *all* causes in ourselves, there is no moment in which we do not govern. In one case we are crossing a river upon broken ice, springing from one cake to another, as they are driven by the currents, never secure of our footing, and in continual danger.

In the other we are as navigators, with a sound

craft under us, in which we calmly set both sail and rudder, and direct our course without anxiety to the port we wish to reach. It is the first lesson of power to learn that all possibilities centre in the individual will.

There is no such thing as intermittent law.

Unless action is constant and unvarying it does not manifest a law. A law does not operate at one time and suspend its action in another. If this were true we could never depend upon results. If law is supreme it can never lapse. Then we have no alternative, if we insist on "accidents," than that of a chaotic universe.

It does not follow that the strict relation between cause and consequence is interrupted because we cannot, in any particular case, trace the unbroken connection.

If a man's life at any point could become unwillingly subordinated to another so as to make of him a "victim," and relieve him of the responsibility of consequences, he would not be a free agent, and our teaching of freedom and responsibility would be false. If man suffers from accident he is not living under the dominion of law.

If, however, the cause of the "accident" lies in the man's own Karma, the law is vindicated and established, and we may rest secure in its beneficent operation in every life. The mills of the gods grind so slowly that the grist of to-day may have

been put into the hopper in some incarnation far remote, but doubtless by the man's own hands, for it is only our own grist that comes to us through the mill of life.

We are like eagles chained to a barnyard perch. We flutter our wings uselessly and turn a restless eye to the mountain-peak where lies our home, but every time we seek to rise we feel the hurt of the tether which holds us down.

We do not realize that we are ensnared in our own mistaken thoughts and purposes — self-hypnotized and paralyzed with fear.

We learn to look upon ourselves as captives — until there comes a day when a new light shines into our soul, our fetters are broken, and we go free.

Some truths are suddenly revealed to one in middle life which he has never before perceived.

They flash upon his consciousness like the light of distant stars of his own planetary system — travelling toward him for ages and just arrived at the outermost bounds of his spiritual horizon.

When a shipwrecked mariner has been cast upon a desert island his first thought is to raise a mast and fly a signal of distress. Day after day he goes to the hill-top and scans the sky line anxiously, looking off to every point of the compass in the hope of sighting a passing vessel. After long waiting he may open his eyes some morning to

discover that while he slept a ship had anchored within hail. He is again in touch with his fellow-men, and a way is suddenly opened to return to all that he holds most dear.

How many an anxious one has watched for a passing sail to rescue him from some shipwreck upon the shoals of human life—the shoals of broken health or fortune, or a shattered home! How, day after day, he has gone, perhaps, to his little lookout, and returned from his search disappointed and hopeless,—to awaken at last to the realization that in all his months of weary watching help had been upon the way! In the hours of the long night relief had come from some quite unexpected quarter, and his waiting and exile are ended.

There is never a moment in life when any of us can really justify discouragement.

It is easy to say “the unexpected happens,” but why should not the unexpected always be our *expected* good?

Why should our horizon be ever darkened by the mists of dejection or the thunder clouds of despair?

We cannot look out clearly through the windows of the soul when they are wet with the cold rains of sorrow.

The spiritual eye is telescopic and never fails to serve the tranquil confidence of spiritual wisdom.

The same winds blow for us all, but they serve us upon different tacks according as we set our sails.

Some men need a tornado to drive them into their true course, and some need to be cast on desert islands before they realize their faulty navigation.

As mariners are guided by the headlands on the coast, and mountain travellers by certain peaks so high they never can lose sight of them, and as desert pilgrims watch the sun and stars in journeying across the trackless wastes, so should we in hours of bewilderment look for the spiritual peaks and headlands we call *principles*.

These are to us as fixed stars in the heavens, guiding us through every wilderness that has seemed impenetrable and bringing us surely to the places of rest and gladness.

Until we can see and understand *both* sides of life we cannot rightly judge "success" or "failure."

Thought principles are like electric currents in live wires.

If misunderstood and improperly handled they are dangerous, and sometimes kill instead of serving us.

Instead of shrinking from our tests and trials let us regard them as opportunities of advancement. Like the school examinations, they open the way to higher classes and always precede promotion.

No conquest is complete that leaves behind it either aversion or desire.

When we neither flinch from an experience nor covet it, when we can enjoy or do without it with equal satisfaction, we have arrived at spiritual indifference, which is true evidence of spiritual mastery.

VI.

WILL.

“Stronger than woe is will.” — *Edwin Arnold*.

Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. — *Jesus*.

ALL power is most effectually applied through concentration.

In mechanics we bring the tempered steel to a fine point to pierce the solid substance or to an edge for cutting.

Thought can both pierce and cut, but it must have point and edge and be applied by the energy of will. The difficulty is not in our tools, but in the want of skill with which we handle them.

They are too often turned upon ourselves or used on others so maliciously that they react with painful consequences. Railroad tracks and prison bars are both made of steel. Upon the one we speed across a continent; the other holds a man a captive.

Some men make fetters for themselves out of the same conditions that are used by others in gaining greater freedom.

Obstinacy is the mark of a weak will. It asserts itself in an emphatic and abnormal way, because distrustful of its power.

Continual self-assertion shows a sense of weakness and a lack of balance. The true spiritual will is always confident of its power and is never made impatient by delay or hindrances. A fine point pierces easily. A sharp edge cuts with very little pressure.

The potencies of will cannot be stated in dynamic terms. They are incalculable. Intelligent will is imbued with all the occult forces of the universe and draws from the universal energies.

All spiritual dominion is based upon the recognition of its powers. We do not need continually to affirm, "I will breathe;" "I will walk;" "I will see." Such assertions would surely indicate essential weakness. We easily recognize our freedom and ability to do these things at pleasure. When we have no doubt of our capabilities all effort is forgotten in their natural expression and activity brings satisfaction. We then adjust ourselves easily to all conditions and find greater delight in employing our strength for the help of others than in a careful consideration of our own requirements. When resentment, grief, or disappointment make their demands upon us we choose between a selfish indulgence and a wise acceptance of the new conditions they involve. In one case we find our energies benumbed and paralyzed, in the other they are strengthened and developed through right action of will.

We build the sepulchres of our day-dreams. We entomb our shattered ideals and weep above their graves, or else we gain a clearer understanding of a life of progress, and with purified purpose and larger knowledge build more stately mansions for the soul. We enter upon more vigorous life. We embark on a fresh voyage of discovery and lay our course on a new tack. We find in every trouble a friendly fog-bell anchored above some reef of which it gives us kindly warning. Its tones no longer sound in our ears as moans of our wrecked hopes.

"Executive ability," when it becomes a matter of pride, is often the expression of a diseased will.

A normal purpose governs its own life and does not needlessly employ itself in directing the activities of others. Activity in externals is not infrequently the result and the excuse of spiritual indolence. A true life insists upon freedom for all and endeavors to protect another from feeling an undue influence of its own, in order to make the best conditions for development of character. It does not wish to dominate, but to free. A desire to govern others is invariably the mark of weakness in self-government.

Our modern homes are centres of all good things in the material life.

The telephone rings — we respond to the call

and listen to the voice of our friend who may be a thousand miles away or under the same roof.

When night comes on we turn the key or press the button of an incandescent light, and our apartments are illuminated as if by magic.

The day grows cold. We open radiator valves, and soon have any degree of heat that we require.

We are thirsty, and the cool clear water flows through our pipes from the far-off spring in the hills.

In all these matters it is our own intelligence that discerns our wants and the action of our will that opens the sources of supply.

Our friend would call in vain if we refused to listen at the telephone. We could sit all the night long in darkness if we did not choose to turn on the lights. We might perish of cold or die of thirst if we declined to avail ourselves of the channels through which heat and water come to us. It would make no difference that we were on the circuit of the electric current, or that we had steam radiators, or that our dwelling was included in the water system which supplied our neighbors. The voice of our friend would be dumb to us, the lamp be dark, the radiator cold, the water-pipes dry, if we should elect to have them so.

These things have their correspondences. We can miss of nothing we desire in life, of light, heat, power, or song, except as we shut ourselves out

from it through inactivity of will, as the result of indolence or fear.

Our spiritual abodes lack nothing that we need. But it is our will that attracts or drives away the pleasant and sweet things of life.

When we move smoothly through the country in a railway journey we do not realize the force of the engine that draws us on our way. It is only when we are thrown off the track and the power is shown in its destructive energy ploughing up the ground and tearing its own road-bed that we begin to know the possibilities of its momentum.

A dynamo carried on the engine could transmit a force that would retard the train until the current were turned off. Such is the mental energy that guides and urges our life forward. When it is misapplied it works incalculable damage through thought currents turned upon ourselves, arresting progress and producing pain.

We stumble to-day among the ant hills of our troubles, and they seem to us like mountains. When we have more fully perceived the meaning and purpose of existence we will easily stride over the mountains of difficulty and they will appear to us as ant hills.

Our higher consciousness is as yet but very imperfectly developed. Even our sense life is in its infancy. We are not capable of experiencing

pleasure or pain but to a very limited extent because of our shallow consciousness. The higher the scale of organization the wider is the range of its perceptions.

The sensations of a jelly-fish are doubtless very limited. As man grows in refinement he becomes constantly capable of deeper suffering or higher joy, and with larger capacity of pain and pleasure comes a larger power of endurance and control.

There is no point at which the vibrations of distress cannot be changed to satisfaction and gladness. There is no situation of discomfort possible to mortal life that is absolutely beyond remedy.

Our dominions can be more easily extended than we are ready to believe. While we continue as dwellers in the kingdom of fear we are fettered. But we have manacled ourselves. We can break the shackles, cross the borders, and possess our own.

The sovereignty of man is never realized till he has become obedient to the spiritual nature and vowed allegiance to his higher self, whose voice is always calling to him, "Friend, go up higher." It is only in such obedience that man gains knowledge of the "secret of the Most High."

The feeble flicker of purpose which most men designate their "will" is an impulse that is soon expended and accomplishes nothing beyond merely

personal ends. Selfishness dissipates power. It scatters energy that, rightly concentrated and applied, would bring magnificent results. Egotism asserts itself as much in fear as vanity; as much in indolence as activity. Any anxious thought related to the personal self shows lack of true polarity of mind.

A sluggish mind refuses to accept a new idea that emphasizes personal responsibility, and calls for change of habit. Self-indulgence is the greatest obstacle to progress. Men do not wish to be awakened. They demand a deeper slumber and find their opiates in sensuality, until some hour of severer suffering arouses them to better things in order to escape from pain.

The law which has produced the pain demands their confidence and their complete surrender to its remedial action. It insists upon entire willingness to do or not to do whatever may be necessary to bring the sufferer into accord with his best impulses. He must cease to exert his ingenuity and will in building intrenchments of excuses behind which to defend himself. There is no trouble of body or environment; no anxiety or grief that walls one in without some door of escape into the realms of perfect peace.

Every fresh revelation of science is new demonstration of the marvellous and absolute precision of Nature's methods, tending always to perfection

of its forms and purposes. We are turning the pages of Nature's primers now more rapidly than ever before, and find in every line the evidence of silent energies of an infinite power.

The master mind which built the great dome of St. Peter's showed itself also in the careful detail of form and color on the walls. Every delicate touch of brush or pencil was as necessary to the finished picture as that of the chisel to the columns and foundation stones. Muscle alone could never have raised this superb masonry. It is a monument to mind and will. The mind not only designed its architecture, paintings, and sculpture, but also the machinery which supplemented muscle, and made the whole achievement possible by raising each stone to its place under the direction of the will.

Imagine a pilgrim throwing his arms about one of the columns in the vain delusion that he was helping to support the roof! Such egotism we would call insanity. It is akin to that which prides itself upon its value to mankind in some private or public station of temporary responsibility, and dreams itself a pillar of society or church or government.

Again imagine our pilgrim sleeping in his rags amid the beauties of the temple, insensible to all the grandeur! Yet in such lethargy do many live so far as thought-life is concerned, and even

think themselves intelligent. The very drowsiness of our ragged pilgrim is increased by the incense and the organ and the chanting of the choirs, and all those things which stir to very ecstasy a nobler and more developed mind.

It would be a very easy matter for Nature with her varied energies to put us all in full possession of the highest degree of health and opulence. The very gentlest application of her forces would quickly remove any obstruction in our circulation or surroundings.

And, indeed, she urges all this upon us in every possible way, and stands ever waiting patiently for our acceptance of her benefits.

The only power that is sufficient to divert or misdirect this energy is man's own mistaken thought. It is our privilege to hold ourselves in any uncomfortable attitude toward life our regal will may choose. We cannot break Nature's laws, but we may regulate our private relation to them.

We are like passengers in a railway train or on an ocean steamer. The carriage moves smoothly upon its rails. The ship sails steadily upon its course. The traveller may enjoy the scenes through which he passes: the beauty of the landscape or the glory of the waters. He may open wide his window and watch all the changing panorama as he speeds along, or he may draw his

blinds and close his eyes, complaining bitterly of his surroundings, and inducing the greatest possible discomfort, so that the hours pass without pleasure or profit. Meanwhile the great engines carry him forward and the incidents of the journey are of consequence mainly to the traveller himself. His mental attitude has not hindered to the least degree the regular action of the powerful machinery. It has only made his own day miserable through infirmity of will.

When a man is wrecked upon an unknown island he goes to work to cultivate the soil and make the best of his resources as if the place were to be his residence for life.

Our disappointments and misfortunes often strand us where we find no opportunity to sail away. Our boats are all destroyed and nothing is left but to explore our undiscovered selves. Until we are cut off from the distractions of our usual occupations and sense lives, it is easy to neglect the richest opportunities which lie the closest to our hand. We mistake, perhaps, for desert soil that which contains the possibilities of largest fruitfulness.

If we are passing through what seems to be a wilderness let us go to work to fertilize a garden in the sand.

It will open to us a new field of spiritual botany and give us the satisfaction of discoverers.

It is better always to lose sight of our troubles as quickly as possible and let them die through neglect than to prolong their lives by careful nursing. We can easily find plenty of others if we wish at any time to fill their places, for "the woods are full of them."

Some people would be actually lonesome without the difficulties they have nursed so long and carefully. In many cases they are seriously disturbed if any attempt is made to show them that it is not necessary to extend a lengthened hospitality to trouble. Trouble will leave us when we decline to contribute to its support. If it has failed to arouse our highest will and only taught us lessons of endurance, it has not yet accomplished its full mission. Endurance should not be the aim of life. There is a higher gospel.

We often fancy ourselves spiritual when we are only weakly sentimental. Our emotions have perhaps been stirred and made us restless in our dream life. We have not been awakened to positive action, or the perception of real principle.

There are many "castles in Spain" which are patterned after metaphysical architecture. There are many who call themselves seekers after truth who are only following new lines of amusement without serious purpose.

The day will come to all of us when our work will be tried by fire and flood, and even Calvinistic

hells may then seem mildly picturesque compared with the experiences through which we pass. When, after the storm, the day star has arisen above our horizon we may know that the night is really gone and the shadows can never again be quite as heavy as those that lie behind us. Whatever difficulties may henceforth await us, we will at least have daylight on our path.

The morning always brings strength and confidence, and we have seen the dawn.

Every athlete knows that it is the position that is oftenest taken that comes at last to be the easiest. In the higher training of the will we prove the same thing to be true. The constant holding of the best ideals results at last in their complete expression.

Every climb we make brings us to a point of greater elevation where we command a larger view with increased power to control conditions. If there is an uphill upon one part of the road we know that there is surely a down grade on the other side.

This is the compensating law of difficulty. Turn down this page, discouraged one, and close the book. Dwell awhile upon this truth, for much depends upon our recognition of it. It is a sufficient lesson for a day and night.

To-morrow will bring a keener appetite and larger vision if this simple proposition has been truly learned. We can cheerfully climb the hill

to-day with the full assurance that to-morrow we shall find the level. To-day we need this training of the will in the ascent of the hill of difficulty. We will patiently cut our footsteps in the icy pass, if need be, like the Alpine traveller, and with a brave smile on our faces we will go sturdily forward and not frighten ourselves by looking into the dizzy depths below. In the gloom it seems as if there were lions in our path, and by the uncertain light we do not see that they are chained.

If we are called to wrestle with them we will find that man in his divinity is far superior to mere brute force. We are here to learn to overcome, and this is our opportunity. To the victor will belong the strength of the slain. We will not flinch in the face of seeming danger, and often we will discover that it was only our fears that were confronting us.

A gamester does not spend his time regretting the hand that he held yesterday. He makes the best play he can with the cards that he holds to-day, and so in every game learns greater skill. How idle is it for us to weaken the will with sorrow for our yesterdays! The game of life demands our best attention for to-day and the full exercise of all our powers. To-morrow doubtless will bring opportunities of its own for which we must now develop skill that we may be prepared to meet them. Let us give all our

thought to the game in hand, though it be only a waiting game.

We need not for one instant entertain the thought that we have been forgotten among the players. We have our special score to play. None other can do it for us. Why not study well the cards we hold and lay them down with confidence and equanimity? There is sure sometime to be another deal. In the next cut we will get a better hand if we have proved ourselves entitled to it. Meanwhile the greatest skill may be shown by him who does not hold the highest cards.

It is the man of trained and fearless will that wins the honors in the game of life, although his real success may not be known to men. Strength of will is shown as much in renunciation as in conquest. The greatest victory is often in the yielding.

Thought-life is of higher importance than conduct. When we have gained control of thought right action is a consequence. We often dwell too much upon the matter of conduct and too little upon the mental cause behind it. When the will has been purified and strengthened the impulses will be symmetrical and true.

A wise man never quarrels with his troubles. Such indulgence will intensify and prolong the difficulty. All impatience proves the need of suffering.

Nature readily responds to every mood with which we greet her.

The heavens seem as brass to us when we look up to them with despair, or as the gates of Paradise when our feeling is one of gladness.

Dynamite and giant powder may be handled without suspicion of the fact that they are powerful explosives. There is nothing in their appearance to suggest their force or use. Under certain conditions they are wholly ineffective and may remain for years without indication of their latent power.

No chemical compound can compare with the energy of the will that brought its elements together. There is no conceivable ideal of power which the human mind cannot express. There is no such thing as "physical weakness" or "muscular force," as an eminent Harvard physicist has lately said. All power is expressed first through mind. All life is robust. Every man is stalwart. This is realized to just the degree in which we take our personal conceits "out of the paths of the divine circuits."

We demand continually that our senses shall be gratified with "demonstration," and all the time the soul is showing its power in the tranquil waiting to which we have compelled it, for it knows that in reality a thousand years are as a single day.

God is always at our service. The divine circuits flow perpetually. The path of life is always open and hides no obstacles nor hindrances. It is due to our distorted vision that we see "giants in Canaan," and in their sight we think we are as grasshoppers.

Disease is the result of hypnotism — the hypnotism of an idea imposed by one's own thought — auto-suggestion — or transmitted to it through the mind of another. This is true of any condition that holds us in bondage. Absolute freedom is our birthright. No one can deprive us of it without our consent, although we may have given that consent unconsciously.

We can throw off any undesirable condition when we have recognized the truth that we possess intelligence and power sufficient for all our needs. When we set the will in motion it will find effectual relief. But often we make it necessary that we should be stripped of all other possessions before we enter into self-possession.

It is a curious fact of hypnotism that the subject is generally deaf to all sounds but the voice of the operator who controls him.

A cannon fired close to the ear would not be noticed in the hypnotic trance if the operator chose to close the sense of hearing. Nevertheless, from out the silence at the same command the subject fancies that he hears sweet music, and he obeys

readily the slightest whisper of the one who holds his senses captive. But even in hypnotism the will must first consent before it can be fettered, for if it once asserts its power none other can control it.

All impatience is an expression of fear. It is the mark of a defective will that has not gained self-control. "I am afraid" is a false note that we use daily on the most trivial occasions.

It is easy to exaggerate our troubles. An unwelcome demand is made upon our time. It may be a very modest and reluctant appeal, but to our inflamed mental vision it appears as a robber standing in our path demanding money or life. The few minutes or hours which would easily suffice for the required service seem a most unpleasant interruption to our usual and more desired occupations.

A call is made upon our purse. We know at heart that we should view it as a privilege to make a prompt and glad response.

Our sense of duty will not permit us, perhaps, to pass it by, and we bestow a petty contribution grudgingly. Through failure of the will to obey its highest impulse the action has flowered without fragrance. We have robbed ourselves of spiritual enjoyment and missed an opportunity of growth.

How long shall we continue to indulge our lower nature and foster the delusions of loss and trouble for which we ourselves are responsible?

The flagellants of eastern countries, who torture themselves with the lash in their fanaticism, are no more cruel to their tender flesh than we in our impatience to the suffering soul. We worship our own selfishness with every hour of self pity. Note the action of the law of retributive justice. When we have been crippled by illness, we remember in our helplessness that in our robust health we were parsimonious of time. When we have become bankrupt in purse, we recall many a timid appeal to which we wish we had given a more ready ear.

Thus we expiate our selfishness, compelled to listen to petitions we are powerless to answer, or to make appeals ourselves, in our own agony of need, from which others turn away.

It is necessary that each should get his lessons in the way that he himself shall choose. It often seems to us that some beloved one is choosing painful ways, but true love shows itself in a wise silence quite as often as in interference. It does not seek to control the attitude of others toward itself. It concerns itself only with its mental attitude toward others.

We should detach ourselves from the engrossing thought of self. It is of no less importance that we detach ourselves from the engrossing thought of others. We are bound alike by our affections and aversions. Too great intensity of

thought will cramp and hinder us. Our affections should be widened and enlarged. As they become ennobled they grow less personal and eager. They bring more satisfaction and less suffering.

Aversions should be altogether rooted out, for only our baser nature feeds on them, and they bring nothing but perplexity and sorrow. They chain us to the things we most dislike, till we have learned our lesson of indifference and patience.

The disciple who seeks peace and power must climb above the plane of personality, beyond the surf of sensational life that breaks like turbulent billows on the shore laden with wreckage and débris.

If we recognize love as the real force of will we will apply it oftener in our social and domestic difficulties. It will save us from much useless "kicking against the pricks" which we compel ourselves to suffer through our wilfulness. Love is never a goad. It is a vigorous tonic which corrects the circulation without leaving regret or lethargy behind. We need to remind ourselves sometimes that "love is not easily provoked," and that our friend who has erred is in greater need of true affection than before.

His error may alter our external relation to him, but if our love is really faithful it will guide us wisely, and enable us to give the silent help which only a loving will can render. Instead of striving

to correct the outward manner of another, if we but hold a steady confidence in his spiritual nature we will find that, though the wonderful harp of a thousand strings be dumb to every other touch, it will awaken to the touch of love.

A truly forceful will is always gentle, though it carries a strong hand. Goodness and weakness do not belong together. Real righteousness is vigorous. It is not necessary to drop our own eyelids because our neighbor squints, or to go lame ourselves because he is a cripple.

Wise charity is never blind. It never lowers its standards, to adjust them to the weakness of another. The higher will is vitalized through love. Love makes no compromise with weakness, but demands that we shall rise to our full height. Love is not blind nor feeble. A loving will is truly masterful, but "seeketh not its own."

There is no habit strong enough to dominate a man against his will.

All forces make us suffer till we conquer them. Then they become our willing and obedient servants. When we work with certitude instead of hope we always arrive at positive results.

We attract to ourselves whatever influences we choose.

Thus we fasten clogs upon our feet, or grow the feathers for our wings.

VII.

THE EVOLUTION OF POWER.

That power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men. — *“Light on the Path.”*

Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. — *Jesus.*

POWER is the natural desire and instinct of humanity and the chief attribute of all its Deities.

It is evolved only through the awakening of the soul. This attainment seems to be the purpose of existence on the earth plane. All our occupations aim at increase of personal power. Men do not really care for the baubles of wealth, fame, and position except as they find in them expression of their interior forces or aids in their development.

It is power that they seek to acquire and manifest.

The consciousness of power is the greatest delight of man. Its evolution is his greatest joy. Whether he work in the laboratory or the machine shop, at the crucible or the bench, his efforts are always for the mastery of the principles of nature, that he may use them in the execution of this purpose.

Little by little the race is gaining knowledge of the invisible forces that surround it, and learning to harness them to its will. We construct more powerful engines; we generate stronger currents of electricity. We are learning to overcome the waste of power in boilers and batteries and to direct their energies with greater precision. As we advance in these fields our horizon broadens and we discover continually finer elements of subtler force. We find we are but in the alphabet of dynamics. Every fresh discovery emphasizes the significance and value of the will. Its training is the most important work of life.

Everything that works in the least degree to neutralize or weaken it we should put ruthlessly away from us. All unworthy self-indulgence is suicidal; all mental indolence tends to devitalize the will; all fear paralyzes it.

[Fear is the greatest enemy of power. When we cling to our fears they submerge our lives.]

We have only to let them go to prove the buoyancy of nature which carries us immediately to light and air again and shows us the right course of action. When we know that we embody and express the power of the infinite to the extent of our realization we no longer waste our time in supplication, but we seek development. The ignorant savage implores his deity to save him from the fury of an electric storm. The intelli-

gent man protects himself by putting a lightning-rod upon his house. As we enlarge the province of the will through knowledge we narrow the domain of prayer. When we learn our power to control the forces amid which we live we are no longer suppliants and worshippers. The more a man commands the less he prays. The more he indulges his indolence of will the more prayerful he becomes. Jesus did not pray in the storm on Galilee. He awoke and commanded the winds and waves. It was only when he had become negative through suffering that he implored that the cup of sorrow might pass from him. Yet even in that hour he radiated force that threw to the ground the soldiers sent to arrest him and proved that he had power to lay down the life which no man could take from him without his consent.

We often shirk the responsibility of deciding our own lives and lay too much stress upon apparent "leadings."

It is our privilege to determine what we want to do with life, and every real decision opens a way to action. There is a large domain in which we should seize and hold with a firm grasp the reins of government.

In this realm the prayer of supplication is impertinence. We need to rule and not to beg. The forces that we govern are best developed through obedience to our will.

There is another field in which we ourselves should learn obedience. In this we gain development through service of our higher self and more advanced intelligences than our own.

Thus upon one side of life we need to be positive and govern. Upon the other side we should be negative and obey. We are not sufficiently clear in our discernment. We often obey where we ought to command, and we sometimes command where we ought to obey.

We must know our power and apply it.

I had an opportunity many years ago of observing at close range the practical operation of these principles. The Asiatic cholera broke out in a ship in which I was crossing the Atlantic. Many of the passengers were terror-stricken. They began to pray — and died. The captain was profane and forceful. He fumigated the ship — and lived. His only time of danger was when, for a few days, under the pressure of fear, he too became prayerful. But his strong trained will asserted itself and his pious mood soon proved to be intermittent. It was a passing phase of weakness.

His profanity was but the customary expression of his impulsive nature, open to objection on the grounds of taste, but still an evidence of innate energy in which lay his salvation from the danger of the hour. Realization of divine energy does not make of us weak petitioners.

In the evolution of power we must dismiss all anxious thought of how we appear to others.

Loyalty to our own convictions demands of us that we should not entertain an artificial desire to please or live according to other standards than our own.

We must choose, in every relation, whether we shall rule or serve. Where we choose rightly we gain power. Wherein we err we suffer loss. Sensitiveness to criticism is evidence of infirmity of purpose. It springs from selfishness and shows a lack of self-reliance. It is often disguised as conscientiousness, but is always a mark of egotism and vanity.

All self-consciousness is selfishness. It is peculiarly characteristic of what is called a critical mind.

The problem of the individual life is not primarily how to do the most good to others: it is how to unfold and rule itself. In this process one evolves the power which proves helpful. Service is the best school of development. Helpfulness to others is an instinct of humanity.

If one falls in the street, how many hands are impulsively extended to lift him to his feet!

If a horse finds his load beyond his strength, how quickly passers-by will put their willing shoulders to the wheel!

If property is mislaid or lost it becomes at once

the self-imposed mission of others to recover and restore it to its rightful owners.

If one gains for himself new knowledge, how naturally he seeks those to whom he can communicate it!

All service is privileged opportunity, which gives us exercise for our growing faculties.

Every man possesses a universe of his own.

The human being conforms marvellously in its essential construction and movements to the planet and the planetary system. It has its vital centres, each with its own radius. It combines the elements of earth, air, fire, and water, which permeate all its life. It has its miniature oceans, continents, and rivers, its fruitful and waste places. The base of existence is the atom, molecule, and single cell. Every atom doubtless has its own intelligent purpose. It is combined with conscious life, unrecognized, perhaps, by the central mind, and classified as the subconscious self, which only means the unexplored.

To bring into harmony and obedience to our own supreme will all this atomic life is to win the kingdom we were born to rule. To carry our highest spiritual consciousness into these subordinate realms is a task worthy our attention through many successive periods of embodiment. Millions of entities unrecognized by material science await unfoldment through the human relations which

make us their masters. They are the squires of our knighthood. It is their delight to serve us.

We are but larger atoms of a higher organization, as our planet is but one globe of a system that itself revolves around the central sun of a larger universe.

We are as blood corpuscles of a grand universal man. The organization of life is perfect. Every molecule is rightly placed.

Before our work in the flesh can be complete, we must control all processes of nature and master death itself.

We have not yet mapped out our heavens; we have not explored our continents; we have not fathomed our oceans. We do not understand our resources. Science has found an energy of five hundred horse power in a cubic inch of space. We cannot imagine limits of the power contained in human brain and body.

We find ourselves flushed or chilled by sudden thought. Why not govern our temperature at will, and learn the secret of adapting ourselves to all atmospheres without depending upon fuel to produce the heat or ice the coolness we require?

Through spiritual intelligence alone comes the development of perceptions which pierce the fogs of materialism and reveal the broad range of human possibilities. Spiritual wisdom makes us seers and puts us in command of Nature's forces,

making possible the best results upon all planes of action.

It is one of the theories of evolutionists that the discovery of a need by the animal has been invariably followed by the development of the organ required to supply it; that the organic and sense life has been a matter of slow growth through recognition of the necessities in its environment.

Thus we see that organized life has come through mind.

Is it then so difficult to believe that the force that has constructed should control and maintain the organs it has provided, and even replace them at need? We find that some of the lower animals possess this power of rehabilitation. In mental science it is apparent every day that organic disease is as readily relieved as nervous disturbance, and chronic troubles yield as easily as acute disorders without regard to the length of time they have prevailed, or to the advanced age of the sufferer.

If life or anything related to it is a gift, what becomes of the theory of evolution? Is it not a reasonable belief that what is true of the plant is true of man, and life is growth from seed to fruit in oft-repeated and ever varying incarnations? Where is the gift to vegetable life but the soil and sunlight in which they grow? — and even these they have appropriated for themselves through the law of vibratory affinity.

The rose and the chrysanthemum have required many reëmbodiments to bring them to their present size and great variety of tint, and each has prepared the way for that which followed.

All evolution is an awakening to higher realization. The new perception demands expression and creates new forms for its use.

Discovery, desire, and development are the successive steps of progress.

It is *recognition* and not time that is the essential element of growth. This is the healing principle which brings improved conditions in the body and control of the surroundings.

There is no suffering from want or weakness but that which comes from lack of understanding.

What more could we ask for our happiness than the knowledge that we are creators and sovereigns?

We have only to take possession, and all the universe proclaims, "Long live the king!"

It is ours to choose whether we will be subjected to the action of the law of material gravitation which draws downward or to that of spiritual levitation which draws upward. Not only do we elect but we operate these laws in our own being. Trouble cannot be kept away when we persistently attract it; nor can prosperity, nor health, nor happiness.

No sense of disappointment is ever possible to

him who has attuned himself to the true keynote of existence.

Selfishness is the heart failure of our spiritual life.

Thoughts which spring from personality and relate to that alone inevitably obstruct the spiritual vision.

Until we have purged ourselves from every form of personal selfishness we cannot become channels for the free and unimpeded flow of universal good and wisdom.

The freedom which we gain from truth is freedom from all care of self — the loosing of our bonds of egotism. Purification of character comes through the experiences which seem to scorch and blister in their intensity of suffering. They are deeply grievous in the present hour. All smelting and refining of ores and all chemical distillation require concentration of heat. The furnace and the crucible must be raised to the highest degree of power.

Gethsemane and the "Via Dolorosa" precede Calvary. Afterward comes the resurrection, and after resurrection ascension. Let us remember in our trial the "Nevertheless, afterward," when the peaceable fruit of righteousness is ripened. Our angels are always with us in the wilderness, and though we may be isolated for the moment and endure the dreary sense of loneliness and desolation we will be comforted abundantly.

Before we are fully crucified our sorrows have pierced hands and feet, head and heart. We can no longer go whither we would. We cannot reach for what we want. We wear the crown of thorns and from our wounded side flow the life currents. Thus bruised and sore we learn the lesson of love, learn to receive and learn to give. We no longer selfishly desire to accumulate and to hold. We are willing to let go without reserve, trusting to the influx of the superabundant life into which we enter through the spiritual birth.

The personal man exists no longer, but from his sepulchre the stone is rolled away and the higher self steps forth as master of all conditions of existence, which can never bring him hurt or hindrance.

In the darkest hour of the crucifixion we hear the old-time challenge: "He saved others, himself he cannot save. Let him now come down from the cross and we will believe in him."

Stretched upon our cruel cross of poverty or illness from which we have not yet found deliverance, is it necessary that this last thorn should be pressed upon the brow, this last nail driven through the helpless limbs, this last drop drained from the cup of suffering? And yet the challenge is a just one.

It will be fully met and answered. But Calvary must needs be first. It lies in every path to a true throne.

One does not "come down" from a cross. He mounts upon it as a stepping-stone to higher things, careless whether others believe on him or not, so long as he finds the way of light.

It is only through the baptism of pain that we become the helpers of troubled ones — only through drinking of this cup that we share in the redemption of the world.

We shall be entering soon upon a new century. It opens an era of new thought.

We are drawing scattered forces to a focus. We are killing out the sense of separateness in human life and studying with more profound interest the problem of unity. The development of individuality goes hand in hand with deeper consciousness of universal sympathies. In all the arts and sciences, in mechanics and in literature, we seek simplicity and fundamental principles, indifferent to the destruction of time-honored theories and ignorant beliefs.

The religious teachers of the past have drawn sharp lines of distinction between God and man, time and eternity. They have talked of the "saved" and the "lost," the "Christian" and the "heathen," the "here" and the "hereafter." They have localized heaven and hell, separated soul from body, spirit from matter, the universal from the particular. Life was considered as something quite apart from death. Minerals, vege-

tables, and "dumb beasts" had no share in the intelligence and soul-life of the human being.

Let us glance at some of the changes wrought in spiritual chemistry through the propositions of new thought:

Humanity is itself divine.

All men are the sons of God.

Time and eternity are one.

Heaven and hell are ever present with us as mental experiences.

All life is sacred. All days and occupations are holy when governed by loving purpose.

"Death does not differ at all from life," as was taught by Thales six centuries before the Christian era.

One life pervades all kingdoms, varying only in degree of unfoldment, and continually progressing in all toward higher types.

In one of the art galleries of the city are two paintings called "The Old Navy and the New."

One is a picture of the frigate "Constitution," the other of the battleship "Massachusetts" — showing something of the changes made in naval vessels since the early part of the century. The points of contrast offer an illustration of the changed thought of the present day.

The name of the new ship is individualized. The bulk is reduced from the old model. The great spread of canvas has disappeared.

The dimensions are altered, and every line is one of grace and beauty.

The hull is steel, the driving power steam and electricity. Speed has been greatly increased.

The port holes are much smaller, and the guns of finer calibre, while more effective in their range and power, and far beyond the boldest expectations in the gunnery of a hundred years ago.

In the interior furnishings the incandescent lamp has taken the place of sperm oil. All the nautical appliances show the great advance of science.

The food and clothes of sailors and marines are of a quality unknown to those who manned the "Constitution." The standard requirements of the officers are much higher than those of former days.

With all these changes we find the same ensign at the peak, and pennant at the fore, but the starry field shows a larger and grander union of States than was included in the plans of the early patriots.

There is not much in common between the hut of the Congo African and the palace of a merchant prince of the Western world. They both have roof and walls, with the simple object of a shelter. In very similar relations stand the old and new thoughts of God.

The materials and the architecture are unlike,

but both are based on the idea of a protecting power.

In the material existence we get only a glimpse of the eternal verities, and often fail to understand the connection with the present day between what has gone before and that which follows.

It is impossible to make an extreme statement of any truth, for the reason that our highest conception must fall far short of the reality.

We cannot overestimate the power or benevolence of the forces amid which we are developing our spiritual nature.

In our fear of being thought "visionary" we are in danger of digging our ground anchors so deep into the earth that we will be held captive to the material life. Is it any wonder that when our cables have been cut or broken through some sobering experience we sometimes drift away into the clouds forgetful of the attractions that once absorbed us? Is it strange that in our unfamiliarity with the regions of higher thought we sometimes become bewildered and seem to hang betwixt two worlds, unwilling to return to the old levels, yet ignorant of the way to pierce the clouds and rise into the clearer atmosphere beyond? Perhaps there are few disciples of new thought that have not at some point of their progress found themselves in such perplexity.

The only escape from the dilemma is to go

still higher to where a brighter outlook will be found.

Pleasure or power is the choice presented to us. Our greatest obstacles are indolence and fear.

We allow ourselves to be deluded with the thought that our necessities on the material or intellectual plane make spiritual activity impossible and excuse us from all responsibility for poverty in better things. How easy to throw the blame on "circumstances"!

Power comes only through entire obedience to the highest law with which we are familiar. While we fulfil the law of love in all our thoughts and actions we cannot fail to grow. Nothing but an unloving life can hinder us.

We are not suffering from inability or lack of knowledge, but from failure of purpose. The weakest individual has more knowledge and power than he ever applies to use. As we enlarge expression we open new vistas of truth. The highest force is not unattainable because of our being human, but because our selfishness would make it dangerous to ourselves and others. We are suspicious of what we do not understand. This is why the possession of spiritual power makes one appear as nothing in the eyes of men. The true disciple does not turn bread into stone and multiply loaves and fishes for his material gratification or to satisfy the curiosity of the multitude, hence he

is regarded with dislike. He lives a life apart from the contentions of the market and the forum, but deals with forces that would easily govern both.

Power over power is what Jesus promised to his followers. Such comes only to the man who has completely mastered himself, and its possessor is invincible.

When we understand love as a force and not a weakness, we find in it the very key to everlasting power. Nothing can successfully oppose us when we have identified ourselves with the Supreme Love. Self-love is an inverted force, and becomes destructive. It is the impulse in all suicide and crime. Infinite goodness cannot play the tyrant, even to save us from ourselves.

Mental causes seem remote and insufficient to produce results from which we suffer. But when we have acquainted ourselves with the laws of thought, we are often able to trace their action more clearly than that of drugs in chemistry.

Every evil feeds upon antagonism. Men are constantly inciting one another to resistance and attack. These are the most expensive methods we could possibly devise for the attainment of our ends. We cannot exterminate an evil or solve a social difficulty by a set of resolutions spread upon the records of a reform society. We cannot overcome a habit by mere resolve.

When we have really *recognised* truth it sets us

free. When we have begun to radiate love, those things which seemed impregnable disintegrate like the hard rock of refractory ores placed in the chemical vats of the reduction works. When we begin to "live the life" we find that our candle "gives light to all that are in the house," and will not be hid in a secret place. Our power asserts itself in all our relations to others. It vitalizes everything we touch, but produces no elation or vain-glory. We accept all results as evidence of the accuracy of the principles with which we are learning to work. The cancer of self-love is healed. With all our heart, and strength, and soul, and mind, we love the higher good. Fresh life flows through our veins, and we begin to realize that for which we have vainly sought so long.

Love easily loosens all our bonds. There is no discomfort that will not yield to its sovereign power.

The sun compels the traveller to lay aside the cloak that wind and storm have failed to take from his grasp.

When experience flings its javelins at us in life's turmoil, we often strike the sweetest chords upon our harps. When we sit in the seat of satisfied desire, ease and comfort bring us lethargy.

If pain is rightly understood it teaches us the deeper, stronger possibilities of humanity, but if we were not so blind to the advantages we possess

we would not need the friendly offices of pain to arouse us to sight and action.

A stagnant pool does not clearly reflect the stars and neither does troubled water. Power does not dwell in indolent or anxious minds.

When we have put away all eagerness and learned the lesson of true confidence, we are in training for high achievement. It is no reason for discouragement if old habits of mind return at times like the retreating tides.

As we watch the ebbing waters an occasional wave will roll back so far as to make us feel uncertain of its outward movement, while the flood tide often seems to the watcher to be receding.

So do our thought impulses appear to move us in directions we have not sought, and hold us from the lines on which we most desire to advance.

Outside the caverns of mystery, in which we search for truth, lies sunlight that would blind our mortal eyes; while within, the occasional flash of our torches on a crystal, or the phosphorescence of a drop of water, seems to us a blaze of glory, and the pebbles in our path appear as treasures beyond price.

The day will come when we will dare to claim the full power that belongs to us, and realize that we are limitless indeed, and, as Walt Whitman says, are not contained between our hats and our boot-soles.

Poverty and disease are not the expressions of righteousness.

They do not reflect the true image and likeness of God.

Great spiritual potencies are born from great emergencies.

Nature does not waste her highest impulses on trivial occasions.

We get the greatest force from our severest trials.

It does not come from mere endurance, but from a bold and steadfast attitude which has no thought of yielding.

**The way of peace is the way of power.
It brings us to repose without lethargy, activity
without effort, love without anxiety, and joy with-
out reaction.**

VIII.

DECISION.

The first step in occultism brings the student to the tree of knowledge.

He must pluck and eat. He must choose.

No longer is he capable of the indecision of ignorance.

— “*Light on the Path.*”

IN a history of the development of the Cripple Creek gold mines it is related that experts of wide reputation in the mining world and with large experience upon five continents pronounced the deposits superficial. It is significantly added, “*It was this uncertainty that delayed development.*”

It was finally the men of brawn and muscle who proved to the world that underneath the grass-roots lay fabulous riches.

At *greater depth* the district was shown to be all that the most sanguine had anticipated.

Deep mining then became the factor. The veins were absolutely without number and of every conceivable course and dip. Often the miner who goes to search for the extension of a rich vein finds an entirely new vein instead.

It was the patient toilers who had worked with confidence and decision, unaffected by the doubts of those about them and undismayed by their own

difficulties, that finally brought to light the richest gold mines of the century.

In the development of man's higher nature we find it also true that only he who works with the patient confidence of a fully decided purpose ever attains to power — and in the end he too discovers fabulous riches with deep mining in the spiritual nature.

These things are not disclosed to fearful, timid souls, nor to the indolent and self-indulgent.

When we begin to change our thought and interests from material to spiritual things, it is important that we should commit ourselves fully and promptly to the new direction of our lives. Half-hearted measures always result in confusion and failure and delay development.

Upon the material plane we may achieve material success. Upon the spiritual plane we can accomplish a spiritual success, but when we are distracted by diverse impulses and torn by contrary incentives we find ourselves suspended midway between mind and matter, and in a sense divorced from both. There is no middle ground that we can safely occupy.

We must "drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring." One of the greatest dangers to success and happiness upon all lines of human activity is that of indecision. This is the reef upon which so many of our ventures go to pieces. The prin-

pal dangers of the navigator are encountered on the coast. The perils of the open sea are small compared with those of the rocky shore and sandy beach. It is there that we need to build our lighthouses and anchor our light-ships. The life-boats are oftenest overturned in pushing through the surf.

It is just here that we encounter our most serious difficulties in the study of thought principles.

We are reluctant to leave our material shores and trust ourselves to the operation of the universal laws. We are not quite ready to apply the truth to our particular life. We are not accustomed to the larger horizon and deep-water navigation. We have never seen the spiritual principle fully demonstrated, perhaps, and the scepticism of our practical minds makes us reluctant for the venture.

Yesterday I stood upon the curb and watched the fire-engines as they dashed up-street in response to an alarm.

The glad activity of men and horses was superb. There was no trace of indecision. At the first tap of the bell every one had sprung confidently to his post. The fires were kindled without delay. The steam was speedily ready for its work. The animals and their drivers knew exactly what was wanted of them. Each understood his part and brought immediately into play his largest energies without an instant's hesitation. In this spirit we should commit ourselves to our daily living, re-

sponding not only promptly but gladly to every responsibility that summons us. We should be as ready to move in one direction as another, to accept without hesitation every opportunity that presents itself, and to do this without dissatisfaction when the circumstances are not what we would choose.

Nothing that we do in life is complete and permanent. Everything is preliminary to something better, a preparation for something more enduring. We go "from strength to strength," advancing evermore toward our ideal perfection. And as we move, our ideal grows, providing us with an ever fresh impulse.

Every day we are developing new conditions of ultimate success. Not only that, but every day is in itself successful even though no progress is apparent. Our simple effort has at least developed wind and muscle, making us stronger than yesterday, and better equipped for the work at which we aim. If we indulge ourselves in tragic moods and moments of despondency and doubt, we only increase and complicate our tasks. We dull the axe with which we hew, and thus compel ourselves to put forth more strength. It is absolutely necessary to the highest success that we rid ourselves of the fever of impatience and throw off the disease of indecision and uncertainty. All the world suffers from a mental "grippe" for want of real belief in the absolute good.

Persistent confidence is the first requisite in any undertaking if we wish to arrive at positive results — confidence that is in no way weakened by a seeming failure or by days or months or years of disappointment. Such confidence makes delays and disappointments quite unnecessary if it is prepared to stand these tests.

It accepts as a finality, established beyond the need of further proof, the axiom that "All things work together for good." This is the meaning of true fearlessness. It believes that "the universe is for nothing else than to succeed in." It does not measure success by the day's record. It has higher standards than the mere accomplishment of its own trivial purposes. It knows that all merely personal ends are petty, even though they be the building of cities or the civilization of continents. Nothing is worthy the powers and stature of a man but the fulfilment of his divinest being, the unfoldment of his largest spiritual manhood.

Power always destroys itself and us when we use it with no other than a selfish aim. It can be developed and extended to the highest degree only when our purpose is in accord with that of the universal life. This is not gained by the belittling of our daily occupations or the neglect of simple duties and homely opportunities. Nor is it reached by the exaggeration of them.

It is only in the recognition and adjustment of

our real relation to every person, place, and circumstance with which we are brought in contact.

It is in confidence and decision that we develop power.

Fanaticism is more forceful than agnosticism, because it has a distinct and decided purpose without a doubt of its accomplishment.

The history of bigots is a wonderful testimony to the power of confident belief and unselfish aims.

Indecision is a fatal disease wherever it appears. It seems less hurtful to progress to be decided in a wrong course than to remain undecided in a right one. The practical consequences of error may be relied upon to correct themselves through the suffering they entail.

Indecision is prolific of disease and kills through inactivity and stagnation.

No battle was ever won under the banner of "I can't."

It is only when we recognize and boldly assert our power that we find it possible to change conditions. As long as we plead ignorance and incapacity we excuse ourselves from effort and indulge our indolence.

We are victims and bond-slaves just as long as we consent to be considered so and not a moment longer. We begin to manifest superiority to any

and all conditions when we have really made up our minds to full dominion.

No one truly individualized will ever say, "God willing," but instead of this, "I will," recognizing himself as the legitimate expression of God's will.

The voice of the Spirit is always to be heard by him who listens. "Behold, I have set the land before you. Go in and possess the land."

Our grotesque ideas of God have resulted in grotesque expressions of ourselves. As man grows he no longer caricatures Deity in the figure of a Chinese Joss, but fashions an Apollo Belvidere, and knows that his highest art is but a faint expression of a divine idea. He no longer fears the powers of darkness and the prince of the power of the air, because he recognizes in himself the power of light and knows that he is a prince of the universal realm.

We suffer disease and poverty as long as we think we are compelled to do so, and are undecided in our purpose and authority.

A common trouble with us all is our ambition to be masters before we have learned the meaning of service. We are apt to despise the small things and the short steps. We want to *assert* power rather than develop it through the discipline of experience. We want to stride with seven-league boots before we have learned to creep. We are impatient to read before we know the alphabet

and to receive the certificate of skilled navigators before we have learned to stand our watch at the wheel. Confidence is the first lesson in the spiritual primer and full realization is the last.

Before we can arrive at a firm decision regarding a new course we must abandon all regrets concerning the old. We must permit no hesitancy of fear. We must not be disturbed by contrary winds.

Perhaps the greatest surprise awaiting the incarnate soul will be the discovery of the wonderful wealth of latent power of which it had remained in ignorance in its earth life. With an abundant and marvellous provision for our material journey we limp and struggle through a brief incarnation, suffering tortures of hunger, thirst, and loneliness, while living in a land of plenty, watered by inexhaustible springs and peopled by loving presences. The soul lives in an earthly paradise and feeds on husks. It toils as a slave, because it lives so close to the ground it does not know that it is free.

Many never understand themselves or one another till long after they have dropped the mortal body.

We need not live in an illusion because we are embodied in matter, and are dwellers on the planet Earth. If we have deceived ourselves, it is because we chose to dream and to postpone awakening.

We preferred to consider trivial things of real importance rather than view life from a higher standpoint. Truth would have dwarfed our petty occupations. It would not have flattered our personal vanity or confirmed our childish theories of existence.

Life contains a full provision for us all. There is no lack to any human creature who is ready to obey the laws of harmony.

Many will protest impatiently at such a claim, and cite in disproof the wretchedness and squalor that abound among those who are considered helpless.

Such objectors look only at the surface of things, without appreciation of the laws of cause and effect.

It is the fashion of men to be impatient with what they do not understand. It is usual for us to resent the implication that we are strictly responsible for our own faults and failures. The fact that all the world imagines vastly improved conditions for what we have chosen to call the next life only shows the possibility of bettering the conditions of this.

We expect *sometime* to be free from anxiety and grief.

When we are willing to assume our rightful attitude toward one another we will find this freedom can be achieved to-day. There is no

more reason for our present suffering than will exist a hundred or a thousand years from now.

[A spirit truly poised is not dependent for its happiness on anything outside itself.

It is tranquil through the recognition that all life is evolution of character, and that each is responsible only for his own development. Character is an individual possession. We cannot acquire it for one another.

Grief for another's faults will often feed the morbid nature of a weakling and prolong the indulgence of the errors for which we grieve.

A wise and loving indifference will invariably prove a tonic that compels the offender finally to realize that he alone is vitally concerned in the question of his welfare, and that no one else can shoulder his responsibility or share it with him.

All immorality is a condition of hysteria. It thrives on sentimental sympathy, as ulcers often feed upon the salves that are applied for their relief. Our power to assist another is crippled by the depression which comes through pity. Pity is always a sacrifice of power. Pity and power never can be yoked together. True principle is always robust. It is spiritual knowledge, and has in it no element of indecision or distrust. It stands unmoved by temporary appearances, and has unwavering confidence in everlasting good for every life. It admits no doubt or failure possible, but holds to

the assurance that the higher self of every one will eventually claim its right to govern. The facts of time are not distressing to one who lives in the larger fact of the eternal. It is not persuasion or environment that reforms a life, but the awakening of its own innate energies. These alone have power to renew the purpose, vitalize the will, and guide the destinies that we are helpless to control for one another.

Human temptation is a puny thing to an enfranchised spirit.

There are no fetters of habit except what we have forged for ourselves. The same strength which has fastened them upon us can remove them instantly by simply reversing the action of the will, which has already proved its power in the structure it has raised, as the heavy stones of the great pyramid testify to the strength and skill and ponderous machinery employed in its erection.

We often neglect to reckon intelligently with the forces we set in motion to make or mar our lives. They are not to be treated as playthings or despised as the creation of idealists.

It is folly to fall upon our swords on the field of a lost conflict like the old commanders of the Roman legions. The tides of battle often turn when least expected. Until we can see every corner of the field and understand the movements of the unseen hosts about us to which we are

related we have no right or reason to lower our standards or admit defeat.

The strategic movements of an army often take on temporarily the appearance of disaster and retreat when they are only the preparation for an overwhelming advance to final victory.

We govern kingdoms that have never been polled. Their census is unknown to us, their power unsuspected. If we waver in our purposes our house is divided against itself. The different factions endeavor to fulfil their understanding of our wishes, but when we weakly yield to fickleness there is confusion in the camp and we are torn with the contending elements. Our greatest crime is a surrender of our right to rule ourselves. Our greatest weakness is a state of indecision.

When we recognize the power of the soul within us and the value of its work we know it is incapable of defeat. Not only is our life invulnerable to evil, but it is invincible in every decided purpose.

Let us stand upright on our feet. Our ankle bones will find the strength they need. Let us stretch forth the arm that we think withered. We will speedily find that it is whole. Let us go boldly forward with a song upon our lips, indifferent to any suffering or death which leads to the awakening of slumbering powers. Should we not gladly serve if thus we learn to govern?

Right living is true service. It yields an ever-increasing satisfaction. We have no reason to wish for better opportunities through larger possession of money or influence. The only real power is that which radiates from character. All our fancied limitations lie in the artificial conditions we create. They do not belong to the real man or his environment. We are slow to accept the truth of our infinity. Sooner or later we arrive at its recognition.

Truth awaits our pleasure. Its acceptance is a matter of choice to every individual. We can never exaggerate the intelligence or power of the spirit. Every demonstration comes to us at the moment we are prepared to welcome it. We must needs break down the walls of doubt and indecision we have built about us before we can obtain the evidence we seek, as we must open our eyes before we can see the sun and study its phenomena.

Our titles and estates are ready when we claim them. The freedom day of the soul is not defined and limited by any statutes.

Success is quite impossible to him who throws his energies into the forging of thought fetters, and hears only the voice of his lesser self.

To an illuminated will the perplexities of life are but the dust stirred by its chariot wheels in its triumphant progress.

It takes joyfully the spoiling of its goods because

it knows that every experience is friendly and helpful, and will feed its power.

We spurn the thought of escape when we have learned to transmute disagreeable conditions into spiritual nutriment. When we know that, we can change our relation to suffering through mastery of ourselves.

The dwellers in malarial climates sometimes plant the eucalyptus in their gardens.

This wonderful tree absorbs from the atmosphere the poisonous elements, and makes them contribute to its sturdy growth. When we understand the secrets of spiritual chemistry we thrive upon conditions we have always regarded as malarial. Vexations, disappointments, mortifications, and annoyances of every kind will furnish us with elements of nourishment. Not only do they cease to poison our happiness and becloud our days, but we can easily welcome them as helpful tests of our development.

After the dreary days of temptation in the wilderness we emerge with larger control of disease and devils. In such hours of trial we make our final decision upon many a question which will never again possess the power to disturb our peace, because we know the force that we embody.

The value of experience is greater than we can understand while under the stress that it involves.

Its cost is always an indication of our need. We get it at the lowest price, and at our own bid. No one but ourselves determines the emergency or names the compensation we must pay. The "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" are the uncertainties and fears with which we torture and wound ourselves in every hour of sojourning in the land of indecision. When we once have passed the barriers our doubts have raised we find an open way to power.

The time to realize and assert power is when we are most sensible of weakness. The time to declare health is when we are suffering from illness. The time to avow opulence is when we are most painfully conscious of our poverty. It is in the valley of decision that we find relief from all these things. But it is necessary that we should stand alone before we can walk erect and free, and this is first a mental process.

When the early adventurers went to South Africa for diamonds, they built their huts of mud and laid out roads for hauling their supplies.

After they had thoroughly examined the country their experts pronounced it a barren and worthless land.

Others followed who were more enlightened and less prejudiced. These soon discovered that the very huts in which they lived were thickly encrusted with the precious gems.

The clay road itself was a rich bed of diamonds. Is it not so with life? We think this world of matter very poor. We live in huts and search for wealth outside. At last, after great tribulation and continual disappointment, we awaken to the truth that we ourselves contain the gems of greatest value and of rarest promise. As long as we think ourselves dependent for happiness upon any material thing, we are the slaves and not the lords of matter. When we truly understand, we are thankful for life *as it is* in every hour, knowing that it holds the highest possible conditions necessary to our good. We may feel sure that this is true, not only for ourselves, but for every other life as well. We are always in the banqueting house of love. Every hour is filled with pleasant chimes. All our dice are double-sixes, and everything comes our way. Do we resent this as idealism? Then it is idealism of which we stand in greatest need. Do we clamor for a more practical philosophy? Our very demand reveals the fact that we are far from being practical ourselves.

Before we enter into a useless struggle with the material conditions that surround us, let us get a firm mental grasp upon ourselves and we will find that all else yields easily to the change within.

Our conceptions of life are all too small. The kingdom of mind and the kingdom of matter are

far beyond, in extent and richness, any horizon lines we yet have sighted.

We are their lawful sovereigns, spirits clothed in matter, gods manifest in the flesh. If we realized our destiny we would greet ourselves every morning, when we returned from our excursions upon astral planes to take up again our robe and crown of matter, with the beautiful salutation of // the East, "O King, live forever!"

Alexander wept because he had no more worlds to conquer. We have no such cause for tears. We haven't a bodily organ that has found the limits of its powers. Sandow, the strong man, reports that he is enlarging his muscles and expanding his lungs and strengthening his heart continually, that he can every year lift heavier weights. We do not yet use all the air-cells of our lungs. We have not begun to explore the cellular tissue of the brain. We have many muscles that we seldom call into action. There are such undiscovered lands in body and brain that it will require many an incarnation to explore and master them.

Worry comes from a Dutch word, "worgen," meaning to throttle.

We strangle ourselves with worry. This is the greatest enemy of life. We think we have reached the limit of endurance before our backbone has really straightened itself to the weight. Many men and women are like jelly-fish and scarcely

belong to the order of vertebrates. They lack fibre and have not yet lived long enough to develop a real spinal column.

We never suffer so much that we could not suffer far more and live. We do not wear out from overwork, but from improper use of our faculties and worry. We get discouraged and lie down and die before our real capacity for doing and enduring has been tested. Our wills are impulsive and erratic, weak and fickle for the lack of spiritual decision. Our purpose is not clearly formed to express divinity in daily life. We really intend to do it sometime, but secretly prefer to indulge our selfishness a little longer.

If we are honest we will not bewail our weakness, but we will correct it. We will not mourn our uselessness, but will simply go to work and make ourselves useful. We will not lament our hardships, but will change them into stimulants. When we are thoroughly decided and ready to do God's work we always find God ready to work through us. At that point of decision we can never fail in either equipment or opportunity. God's resources are never limited to the range of our perceptions. Much that we do not see exists and has existed always, though our eyes were not strong enough to perceive it. To the unaided vision the skies seem often starless. With a powerful telescope we see one hundred million stars where only six

or seven thousand are visible without the glass. What is only theory to one is often fact to another who has pushed his investigations further.

If we have not studied sidereal time and planetary distances, how can we expect to map the heavens?

If we have examined life only upon material lines, how can we understand spiritual philosophies which make life to others a beautiful and systematic working of intelligent law where we see only suffering and confusion?

There is no doubt but that we shall all look back from the problems which confront us in the immaterial life of the astral plane and feel that in comparison the lessons of earth were simple and easy. If life is eternal progress, as every sane mind believes, the first condition of happiness is confidence, and its greatest danger is the indecision which comes through fear.

When we have settled once for all that the to-morrow of death will never arrive, no matter whether we live in fear or longing for it, we are prepared to eat and drink to-day in security and gladness and feel equal to the conquest of any and all material conditions through the use of spiritual powers.

God grant that we may suffer till all dread of suffering is past, that we may feel the furnace of affliction heated to such stress that from the

mighty impulse of our pain the higher self may be truly born. In the hour of our anguish this serene one walks beside us and in his presence we find all sorrow stilled forevermore.

Bathe in the waters of forgetfulness.
With every day leave yesterday behind—
and *turn not back.*

Discontent and indecision close all doors of success and happiness.

Disappointment should be always taken as a stimulant and never viewed as a discouragement.

Spiritual progress is never hindered by our duties or want of time.

There can be no conflict between our aspirations and our responsibilities.

Our most precious opportunities are often those disguised in tatters. They pass us by unrecognized, because we judge life by appearances instead of principles.

IX.

THOUGHT TONICS.

“ I cried aloud, and wrung my hands in woe
When Grief came to my door in mourning guise ;
I strove to shut the door, and closed my eyes,
But she stood, patient, there, and would not go.

“ Then Pain came down the pathway, sad and slow ;
And Sacrifice with face raised to the skies ;
And Poverty, with brooding, anxious sighs ;
And all Grief’s sisters, talking soft and low.

“ Long, long I stood rebellious, with the door
Closed on the grim ranks waiting there outside ;
My heart beat fiercely, and I paced the floor
With sobs and moans. But when the daylight died,
With trembling hands I flung the portals wide —
And lo ! but Peace came in, to go no more.”

— *Fanny Driscott.*

THE power that we call “ God ” and “ Law ” is wise and strong enough to provide for man the most favorable conditions he himself permits.

“ God ” is Love, and Love could be satisfied with nothing less, for Love is Infinite Intelligence and Power. Where, then, is the limitation, and why do we suffer ?

The answer is *always* to be found within the individual soul, which has the sovereign power of

control. Man can open wide all doors of receptiveness; can throw down all walls and live in the open; or he can shut himself up in the deepest dungeons of his personal life and bar out every ray of sunlight.

The sun is powerful indeed, but the delicate membrane of the human eyelid can exclude it when the man so wills. Nothing is so blinding as the persistent thought of weakness.

The first step in healing or altering the conditions of existence is recognition of the sovereignty of Self.

The next is recognition of the sovereignty of Good.

The work is complete when these two principles have been identified. The windows of heaven are always open. It is *our* windows that are often closed.

The Egyptian peasant fertilizes his little tract bordering on the desert by laboriously hauling up the water from the river with his bucket or wheel. He turns it into his small trenches. But there comes a day when the great river rises above its banks, and in a majestic overflow wipes away all its petty barriers and inundates the very desert itself, carrying opulence of fertility noiselessly and easily to all the surrounding country. If we stand upon the shore and watch its rising tides we see that the waters find their way to every nook and

cranny, and the dry sands are drenched in its floods and cleansed with its billows. These flood tides are irresistible. They are glorious in their power and beauty.

All this is but a faint suggestion of the ever-present opportunities of the soul. Life is always at its flood, though our realization may ebb and flow. It is only we who imagine the ebb as we wade in the murky waters of a shallow experience, indulging our self-pity and bemoaning our sufferings.

If we cease our vain struggles and lamentations long enough to look away from the personal self with its petty cares, and to recognize the spiritual self with its calm confidence of inexhaustible energies, we realize that life is going very well with us indeed, and we are daily gaining the experience we need.

We exhaust our strength in our impatience at our work and the conditions that surround us. There is nothing that comes to us which we could not do easily with true adjustment, but we waste our forces in our worries. It is our leverage that is at fault. When that is changed we will find the heaviest weights are easily raised.

The mechanism of our existence is simpler than we think. None of its cog-wheels are misplaced. If we will only permit them to work into each other where they belong we will discover that there

is no superfluous friction, and the adjustment of experience to need is truly marvellous.

The propositions of Euclid would remain true if there were no mathematical professors in the universities able to demonstrate them. The earth has been always round, even through the centuries when its scientific men declared that it was flat.

It does not follow that a proposition in spiritual science is untrue because we have never learned its demonstration.

Truth is never dependent to the least degree upon the personality of teachers. We must not imagine Truth will stand or fall with any personality. Telegraphy remains an accurate manifestation of electric science even though all the operators in the land be proven incompetent and unreliable.

It is always true when we suffer that, like Peter in prison, we are "sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains." One fetter is the thought of our own weak personality; the other is the doubt of the power of Good.

When the light has shone into our prison and we hear the voice of the Angel of Truth—"Arise quickly, gird thyself, follow me"—our chains fall off, we pass safely through the first and second wards, and even "the iron gate that leadeth into the city" opens to us of its own accord, and we go out again among men, freed from pain and disease,

and strong in the might of the Spirit which has awakened in us the consciousness that all power is given unto us in heaven and in earth.

When our suffering seems almost beyond endurance we may always gain relief by making a bold "change of front." This is considered the most difficult problem in military tactics when made in the face of an enemy, and it is often the most brilliantly effective move of martial science.

Instead of declaring, as we so often do in our mental anguish, "I can't stand it any longer," let us assert with Paul, "I glory in tribulation;" "I take pleasure in infirmities;" "I can endure *all things*." Let us "agree with our adversary quickly" while we are in the way with him, and make friends of our adversities. Nothing else will so quickly disarm their power and neutralize their sting.

It makes a great difference in a landscape whether we see it through a convex or a concave lens; whether we look through the large end of a telescope and thus remove the objects to a distance, or through the small end and bring them within close range. We get a very different impression of a country when we view it from the mountain-tops from what we receive in passing through its valleys.

How vastly different a troubled question looks to us at noonday and at midnight! We flinch in

the hours of darkness from a problem we can meet bravely when we are on our feet and under the momentum of the noonday vigor.

This is all the difference between negative and positive conditions.

The engine which moves the train so easily along its rails when the power is applied to turning the great drive wheels forward can be quickly reversed by a very slight movement of the lever, and all its force thrown into a backward motion.

// By boldly and persistently changing our thought from the negative conditions of discouragement and suffering to the positive conditions of strength and life, the very worst case of nervous prostration can be quickly overcome. Nature abounds in remedial power, and it is always within our reach. Indeed, it is the same force that is tearing the engine to pieces, and needs only to be reversed to drive it forward. //

We ourselves have built the road-bed of our own experiences, and laid the rails on which we are pushing our engines ahead to a larger realization, or backward into suffering. Let us know that the highest lesson of life is not to live in either the present or future, but in the eternal. "He to whom time is as eternity and eternity as time is free," said the old mystic Boehm — an aphorism we should all engrave upon our watch-cases.

When we look at pain or trouble through the

small end of our telescopes they are brought easily within close range and show in large proportions. When we reverse the telescope the same things seem infinitely removed.

Now let us look at the personal man and all his paltry affairs through the lenses which put them far away and bring the eternal man into the field of our clearest vision. When we thus gain even a passing glimpse of our higher selves the landscape of trouble seems misty and remote. We do not have to climb very far up the mountain-side to get above the clouds and find a different world. How many an Alpine traveller has passed from the drenching storm of the lower altitudes to see the glorious silvered clouds below him, and the sun shining in all its radiant splendor on the snow-capped peaks of Jungfrau and Mt. Blanc! It was only a turn of the road and a few rods' upward climb that wrought the magic change. But such an experience can never be forgotten, for it brings a dream of paradise.

How shall we climb out of nervous prostration? Let us begin by ceasing to oppose — ceasing to fight our troubles, declaring their nonentity, while we give ear to the thought of the eternal man — our own true self — whose voice we have learned to know and whom we have invited in to sup with us.

We have thus accomplished a positive molecular change. We have turned off the current of anxious

thought. We have altered our polarity. We have accomplished with our troubles the same results that would follow to the iron filings grouped about the magnet if it should be suddenly demagnetized. The bits of iron fall away. They have nothing to which to cling. The force that held them is transferred to a new field. Our troubles are like spoiled children that seek to gain attention by their kicks and screams. They make faces at us like street urchins as long as we come to the window. When we no longer scold, and calmly pass along in true indifference, they do not find the satisfaction they demand. They feed upon sensation and are starved to death by our refusal to acknowledge them.

The small boy who fell in the woods and hurt himself told his young friends who asked him if he cried, "Of course not, there was nobody to hear." Our troubles often show a seeming intelligence, and leave us when we no longer notice them and they find they have lost the power to annoy.

This comes when we cease to coddle or fear the personal man and begin to cultivate the Spiritual and live in the Eternal; when we learn the meaning of the words, "I, the imperfect, adore my own perfect."

Disease and trouble never enter our dominions unless they are invited. They never stay unless they are entertained.

Science declares that death comes always through disease and for disease we are responsible. Old age itself is never fatal. The fountain of life is perennial. Ignorance and fear are at the root of all disturbance. In overcoming these we vanquish the last enemy. All suffering comes from ignorance of God.

In the beautiful allegory of Job we find that after all material things had been taken from him and he had learned that there was nothing to trust but God the test was successfully passed and his possessions were doubled from that hour.

In the ancient folk-lore we are told of a flood in which all land passed out of sight and Noah had nothing but his ark and the promise of a clean earth. But the flood ended; the ark rested upon solid ground; and the new life was richer than the old.

We read that Abraham was ready to sacrifice his only son, and when he had faced that point of self-surrender the emergency of his life was safely over. To Job was returned his wealth, to Noah his earth, and to Abraham his son.

When we are confident of our possessions we are not tenacious of them. Fear is always a mark of poverty.

Through willingness to surrender we often gain a truer hold.

If we would loosen our life we would always save it.

Intensity of desire is an obstacle to accomplishment.

It is idle to talk of "dying grace" and faith in another life when we haven't enough faith in the passing day to carry us through a single hour without worriment.

Our "faith" too often ends with the limit of our eyesight, just as our appreciation of God's goodness is gauged by the size of our bank account.

Every hour of emergency will bring its own deliverance to him who waits with confidence.

The fears and sufferings which we encounter in one place are left behind as we move on.

Higher levels are always accessible. We need not struggle with any difficulty upon the plane where it appears. If our cellars are submerged we do not have to occupy them. If the fog has dropped down upon us in the valley we must gird up our loins and climb the hillside. In other altitudes we will find the sunshine, and leave behind the restlessness and fever which have wearied us. Life's vexations and annoyances fall away from us in a clearer atmosphere. They are as yesterday's flesh stains which were washed off in our morning bath, or yesterday's bruises which were healed while we slept. The morning finds us fresh and vigorous and ready for the work of a new day. Our trouble was only a dream. Love is the real power which rules our universe

and weaves the warp and woof of life, throwing its shuttle with a wisdom and precision which seem marvellous to our half-opened eyes.

Why do we so often stop upon the threshold of Divinity when we might enter its very courts?

Why do we so often prefer to believe in the *necessity* of suffering and weakness rather than in the possibility of strength and gladness?

Why do we argue so persistently for endurance and resignation rather than accept the larger view of life which vests all power in ourselves and makes us the arbiters of our own destinies?

Why should we cling with such surprising tenacity to our musty theories and dogmas, as if they were treasures from which we could not bear to part, though they have brought us nothing but sorrow and disgust with human life?

How closely we hug our dark delusions, while we thank God we are not credulous as other men! How carefully we nurse our griefs and troubles, priding ourselves that we are "practical" in our bondage!

Poverty and illness we call decrees of God. Fate and luck are our taskmasters.

Spiritual freedom is an idle superstition, death is a wall and not a door. Imagination and mind-reading explain all phenomena, and what *we* do not know is not worth knowing. Happy imbeciles!

Is there no other way for us to climb to knowledge than through pain?

Must we drain the dregs of the cup of sorrow only to find at last that it was our own hand that pressed it to our lips?

We have been often told that we should not grieve the spirit. Is it not equally wrong to grieve the body, the expression of spirit?

The highest good is possible only when we have established full accord between these two.

The body is grieved by our distrust of any of its organs. It is grieved by asceticism and foolish starvation as well as by unreasonable indulgence of the sensual life.

The reaction from one form of selfishness frequently carries us into another extreme that is just as far removed from a true balance as the first. We often swing like the pendulum across the arc of the circle many times before we rest in the spiritual centre that is equally removed from both extremities. Truth involves expression that is rounded and complete. It has become unconscious symmetry that is not emphasized as either vice or virtue. It identifies the human and divine, and does not strangle one in order to express the other.

We do not throttle the child to hasten his progress through the elementary stages of his education. We guide him patiently and kindly, with full as-

surance that as he becomes developed he will put away childish things. Meanwhile his childish things are doing him no injury, and if he occasionally indulges himself in too many "sweets" his own stomach will revolt and eject the poison.

Nature rules her university better than we govern our particular schoolrooms, and has carefully provided that man's self-destructive follies shall very soon correct themselves.

Health is the possession of every one who has learned to draw his check upon the Bank of Universal Life which honors all right demands, and never asks to compromise with creditors.

It is a sacrifice of power to divert our thoughts needlessly to the concerns of the personal life. An unworthy self-indulgence is self-denial in the end, for the reason that it keeps from itself the best things, while much that is called "self-denial" is simply an indulgence in the high privilege of service and a denial only of the lower self.

When we cultivate thoughts of strength for others we ourselves grow strong. Habitual thoughts of peace bring us tranquillity.

The thoughts of opulence will naturally result in wealth if rightly held. True thought will lead to action, but the power is in the thought more than in the action.

|| If all of Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace, there is nothing more

unrighteous than disease and poverty. Any and all attempts to find excuse for them in ourselves or others is perversion of truth.

Life is not the mystery we suppose when we are willing to look it boldly in the face with honest eyes. But we must study it apart from the artificial conditions of a pseudo "civilization."

Health and prosperity are found in the soul's own heaven of simplicity.

We have only to lift our eyes to the serpent symbolizing wisdom, and the glance brings deliverance and healing. We have only to dip in some thought-pool of Bethesda, when its waters have been troubled by an angel, to be made perfectly whole of any disease.

Naaman expected the prophet to do some great thing for his recovery, but a simple act of obedience on his own part proved sufficient for his cleansing.

Our eyes are opened by the healing touch of some cool waters of Siloam, and we find ourselves in a new world which has not needed to be reached by dangerous voyages across strange seas, but which has always lain about us, though we knew it not.

There are no "peculiar" cases to the mental healer. The community of suffering is due to the community of ignorance and fear. This is human and racial, and not in any sense peculiar.

When we have recognized our common weaknesses and killed out the sense of separateness, we have learned the earliest lesson in true brotherhood. The pride of family is gradually disappearing in the larger thought and knowledge of fraternal life.

Suffering has often proved the greatest blessing to humanity. It compels us to search out and remove its cause, and thus we learn the beauties of Eternal Law.

Life is more continuous than our recollection. Is it incredible that we have been personally familiar with all the historical eras of this planet? Is it impossible that we have been performers in many of the dramas we study with such interest? May we not have played many parts on different stages of human action, governing and serving alternately in high conditions and in low? Is it difficult to conceive that we may have moved in the long past through all the range of climate and of social circumstance while following westward in its course the star of empire? Could we not have migrated from one continent and race to another, and from oriental quietude to the evolution of occidental energy? It is a strange fact to be observed to-day that this western nationality of ours is absorbing the composite man of Europe and the East, and the ready adjustment to new conditions suggests that they are possibly

not so new as may appear. One sees in many an American face strange reminders of oriental types, hinting at Egyptian, Greek, or Hindoo ancestry.

There is much in the social and political conditions of the Anglo-Saxon race in this nineteenth century to recall the Elizabethan and Roman eras, which in their turn resembled one another so peculiarly that it would hardly seem difficult to recognize the old performers in new rôles and costumes.

Through all the weaving of mortal and immortal life runs the golden thread of spiritual consciousness. As we gradually awaken, we perceive that life itself is a perpetual miracle.

The old legends are literally true. We sell our souls for a bauble when we deliberately choose the sensual above the spiritual and give it the reins of government.

When the daylight comes to us, whether upon this side of death or the other, we discover that the material coin we have earned by the exchange is as debased and useless as dead leaves.

If here we abide by principle we will find there that we have built real treasure houses and filled them with precious things.

Some people sigh for rest and heaven and angelic company while blind to the presence of veritable angels in their own households — guardian spirits that walk lovingly beside them in the

homely guise of mortals ministering patiently to their daily needs, heedless of their ingratitude and selfishness.

The yearning for rest is generally the fruit of self-pity and indolence. It is best cured by the stripes of severer trouble with which life in its kindness often arouses us to tardy recognition of our blindness. The new difficulties make the former state appear as heavenly compared with that into which we have fallen through our persistent folly. Many of those who long the most for angels to comfort and succor them would not know an angel if he should appear, nor would they find anything congenial in his company. They are not fit for such society. There is but little in them that would be attractive to celestial beings.

A selfish life dulls all our senses and makes us both deaf and blind to our highest good.

If we give ear to other voices we cannot hear the voice of infinite Wisdom.

Our Divinity will not share its throne. It demands an individual kingdom.

We may "go first" and bury our dead, buy and sell our lands and oxen, and bid farewell to those that are in our homes.

We may listen to the voice of fame, the voice of greed, the voice of pleasure, and in the end we are sure to declare that all is but vexation of spirit.

As these voices die away there comes a silence, and out of the silence comes a faint and gentle tone that we have never heard before:

“Behold *I* stand at the door and knock.”

“All things are now ready.” “Ye shall find rest to your souls.”

If we heed this voice we gladly turn away from all the tumult in which we have spent our days and find at last that we are truly honored guests in the banqueting-house of Life, and the banner over us is Love.

None but ourselves can ever fix the measure or quality of our goodness.

Every one is as good as he chooses to be, but none so good as he knows how.

Our lives should not be governed by the opinions of others.

The only matter of importance is that we should deserve to think well of ourselves.

When we are truly poised we are indifferent alike to praise and blame. Praise is no longer sweet to the taste, nor is blame bitter.

Nature is an all-sufficient nurse. The greatest assistance we can render her is to trust her to do her work.

Her resources are not limited by our perceptions.

X.

EXPRESSION.

Speech comes only with knowledge. Attain to knowledge and you will attain to speech.

Life itself has speech and is never silent. — *"Light on the Path."*

“The strongest and sweetest songs yet remain to be sung.”
— *Walt Whitman.*

IT has already become an axiom in metaphysics that all suffering comes from misdirected energy.

Pain is an abnormal expression of life forces that have been diverted from their proper channels or flow through them in disproportionate volume.

Nature cannot be suppressed when once awakened. Its energies cannot be long confined in storage batteries of single cells. They demand a large and varied expression. To this truth all departments of life continually testify. The fecundity and diversity of nature's powers are shown in all its kingdoms.

Man may choose the channels through which this tireless energy shall have its largest expression in his personal life — whether in animal and intellectual vigor wisely blended, or in either one of them unduly emphasized. The spiritual force will employ itself in either or both expressions

subject to the direction of the individual's own will.

According to his choice will he manifest power. The highest expression makes the strongest demand upon the infinite source, and results in the largest growth. Power upon any plane is always increased by use.

A wholesome nature finds its pleasure in its work and does not require the goad of fame or greed.

The demonstration to itself of its own power to create is the liveliest satisfaction it can experience.

To widen its activities and employ them in service is its greatest gladness and presents no thought of sacrifice. There are many who find no pleasure outside the sensual life. Man does not belong among the grub worms, but among the birds. When we begin to comprehend our freedom we find our circulation quickened, and obstructions disappear as our impatience lessens.

The universal aim is happiness. We discover sooner or later that full satisfaction can be found only in right living. It is a necessity that all men should eventually become good or miss the fulfilment of the supreme purpose of human life.

Only in goodness do we find essential power, and only in power, satisfaction. Good is the strongest magnet known to us. Every pang of suffering is an impulse toward health and virtue. Nature will not be satisfied with any imperfect work.

Suppression is not dominion. We must root out and exterminate the wrong beliefs—the mental weeds. We must plough and harrow the ground, and plant an entirely new crop of goodly thoughts. Only in this way can we become proprietors of our fields—the lords of our domains.

We can better afford to give our land a thoroughly new sowing than to preserve large tracts of weeds for fear that in destroying them we shall part with a few heads of grain. Our work must be truly "radical"—root work. Let us not be too "nice" in the winnowing of our seed, for fear we should be thought erratic and peculiar.

It is more trouble to harmonize old thoughts and new than to begin again our thinking upon entirely new lines. The Nazarene discovered in his earliest work that it was absolutely useless to attempt the putting of new wine into the old bottles; inevitably it must burst the bottles. We need not fear that any truth will be lost to a truthful soul.

All error is the incomplete statement or manifestation of something real. It is a partial and imperfect inspiration, and speedily brings its own correction through the suffering that it entails.

The lesson of right expression is the most important we have to learn. It demands of us that

we should guide emotion into its proper channels, and control the valves of feeling so that all utterance shall be normal and wholesome, and leave no smart or regret behind.

Immorality comes often from an injudicious suppression of natural and proper appetites which have been denied and strangled, when they should have been recognized and trained.

Strangulation is not the highest form of self-control, nor does it bring desirable results. There is usually as much intemperance in reformers as in sensualists, whatever be the banner under which they rally.

When Lazarus had heard the voice of the Christ he came out of his tomb, but found himself bound hand and foot with graveclothes.

It is not enough that the command of the spirit should reach us, "Come forth!"

We awaken—we move—but we need the further word, "Loose him and let him go."

Our graveclothes cling to us. They are our errors in which we have been educated, our false beliefs,—our prejudices, resentments, and regrets,—everything which in any way seems to bind us or to limit our sense of the perfect freedom which belongs to truth.

Resurrection brings us into newness of life, out of the shadows into the morning. We have nothing further to do with graveclothes.

Freedom and disease or poverty can never exist together. The one inevitably destroys the other.

We may choose between them, but can never hold them both. It is strange with what persistency we often cling to shrouds, and even sometimes miss the dreary shelter of the tomb that we have left.

Our fountains are too often choked with rubbish turned back upon themselves and draining their waters into stagnant pools.

Mind poisoning precedes blood poisoning. When we dwell in secret upon the thought of trouble, we expose ourselves to further dangers. We think, perhaps, that our lives have been darkened by tragedies of deepest suffering. We imagine ourselves to have endured heavier sorrows than often fall to the lot of men. Our days have been filled with grief; our bread has been as ashes, and "our tears have been our meat day and night."

Our most plaintive wailings are but those of children crying in the night. In the light of a larger life the trouble of the past will disappear as our horizon broadens.

We are still in our infancy, and suffering like children from sore gums and cutting teeth. As we grow, these things that seem so serious to-day will be forgotten or remembered only as our early primers.

When the morning comes to us we will find no cause of tears.

If we have preferred the mourners' seats to places at the banquet, it has been a matter of taste, and the funeral-baked meats have doubtless served our needs.

The flagons of joy have stood always at our elbow while we supped on sorrows. Life is never niggardly of its gladness. Heaviness of spirit is never imposed upon us without our consent.

Wherever we find a special difficulty of environment or weakness of character, we also find, if we look closely, a special faculty for grappling with it. We discover some strong point of opportunity or will opposed to it which is brought out with especial emphasis by the occasion — as we find in tropical countries vegetable antidotes for the bites and stings of poisonous reptiles that abound.

Wherever we find a marked trait of disposition, or a peculiar situation, we can soon discover, in a mental diagnosis, the seed-pod from which it grew and the opposite manifestation which made it necessary. Nature always aims at symmetry. She balances carefully her positive and negative forces. With every need there is some resource with which it can be met, for all supply in nature's wonderful expression has been developed in response to special demand. The soul is like a firefly or glow-worm. It radiates an inner light

which illumines its own way. It possesses the magnetic power by which it can draw to itself the people and things it finds desirable. These interior forces have their corresponding organs in the eye which selects and the arms and hands which reach for the food that the mouth demands. Our spiritual radiations meet and mingle with those of other lives that are related to our own. Distance cannot separate us. We are guided to places and occupations which fulfil the purpose of our incarnation, and through which we give and receive all needful lessons.

Moving on these natural lines, we find the teachers and the tools that we require. The mysterious forces emanating from ourselves govern our environment at every moment. In our journeyings they guide our choice of routes and plans of travel. In library or bookstore these invisible rays search out and bring to our attention that which we find helpful, no matter how remotely it may be hidden and shelved.

In what appears to be quite accidental ways particular paragraphs and pages that we need are brought before our eye. There is no search-light of man's invention which is anything more than a poor suggestion of this spiritual intelligence enlightening every human being. No magnet equals it in its attracting power. The universe is the field of its radiant energy.

Its currents are as irresistible as the law of gravitation. It is the expression of the same infinite wisdom which has provided for the sparrow and the lily.

As yet the race has made but small demands upon the natural resources of our planet.

Malthus' theory is weak in that it takes account of only visible supplies. It overlooks the fact that every fresh discovery in science shows us a new force stronger than any known before.

If steam is to be supplanted by electricity, and electricity by solar energy or liquid air, why should we be anxious about the exhaustion of forests and coal-beds?

If one drop of water contains an untold power, or a cubic foot of atmosphere the energy of 10,000 foot-tons, it would seem as if we had no lack of force at our command.

If nine-tenths of our nourishment is derived from the atmosphere, as is now claimed by science, it would surely be no impossible problem to dispense with the other tenth or find for it some substitute for the food we now think necessary.

At least we need not yet begin to tremble at the thought of a possible increase in population beyond the sustenance provided by Dame Nature.

It would be just as wise to fear lest the birds and fishes should exhaust their food-supply because they grew so rapidly in numbers.

If we would put our emphasis on circulation rather than accumulation we would find that much of our difficulty concerning supply would vanish. If we would recognize the value of the principle of giving in place of the constant thought of getting we would not so often find ourselves in poverty. We need to make more frequent use of the extensor muscles, to open and reach out to one another, instead of so constantly desiring to draw into ourselves. We talk of being just, and fail of being generous. The virtues upon which we pride ourselves are always developed at the cost of symmetry of character, and so changed into vices in the process.

Life is strong and true in its expression only when purpose and action are united and allied with will.

Never for an instant should we give lodgment to an untrue thought.

It opens the door to serious results, and puts our instrument out of tune. Impatience is explosive. It is like the nitrogen in gunpowder. We can no more predict the result of setting it free than we can tell the spot where lightning will strike when it has torn its way through the cloud and descended earthward.

Our only safety is in eradicating it altogether from our temperament.

Emphasis is generally both the child and father of impatience.

It implies a doubt of our own statement. When we are confident of the strength of our position our tones are steady, our speech is calm, and the entire expression of voice and action is in harmony with our highest thought.

Nature's chromatic scale has many octaves. The universal energy finds utterance in weeds as well as flowers, fruits, and forests. The same creative forces are at work in all.

Even the weeds are fragrant, after the cleansing of a storm, when the dust of the highway has been washed away.

Can we not see that the same transforming energy that is manifested among the most highly developed of our fellow-men is working also in the slums of the great cities? The corruption that we find so repulsive and distressing will be surely washed off by the storms of experience.

The divine principle which is within every human being will sometime manifest itself, for all are made in the image and likeness of supreme good. We cannot believe in God and refuse to believe in man.

Much of our distress at sin and suffering results from want of understanding of the principles that govern life. There are many foolish ones whose tearful sympathies are but the symptoms of a moral hysteria, in which they indulge themselves from an unconscious love of sensation and desire

of approbation. In a court of spiritual equity they would be convicted of obtaining admiration under false pretences.

If we could awaken to-morrow with the full assurance that all our desires would be accomplished speedily, might it not be possible that we would examine them more seriously? Might we not discover that some of our supposed desires would result in serious embarrassment? Do we really wish to have back among us all the friends for whom we are in mourning? Is it not true that sorrow at death is often in inverse ratio to the grief expressed, and that a deep veil or hat-band may be only a precaution to conceal the satisfaction of its wearer? There are many who delude themselves with fictitious troubles and have no grounds whatever for their claim that they have been defrauded of their happiness.

If, on the other hand, we could know that our sincerest wishes were on the eve of realization, how quickly would our lives respond to the stimulus of such a confidence!

What strength and gladness we would show, relieved from the depressing influences of old anxieties and fears!

What new vigor would assert itself as the result of losing all our doubts! With what a fine scorn we would look upon our tonics and doses, as quite useless in the new conditions of our minds! Dys-

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of approbation. In a court of law he would be convicted of obtaining a false pretence.

If, on the other hand, we could know the sincerest wishes were on the eve of our death, how quickly would our lives respond to the news of such a confidence!

What strength and gladness we would soon
be relieved from the depressing influence of
anxieties and fears!

What new vigor would assert itself at the news of losing all our doubts! With what a fresh view we would look upon our tonics and doses, a new use of the new conditions of our mind.

pepsia and heart trouble, rheumatism and neuralgia, would vanish as if by magic, showing us that all causes of disease are in the mind and can be changed through mental impulse.

We may have this impulse now. It comes with the knowledge that all forces on the causal or astral plane are pledged to the fulfilment of man's purpose when that purpose is held unflinchingly. It is our fickleness and cowardice that oftenest defeat our aims. The man who dares and perseveres is the man who wins. Daring and perseverance are rare virtues, and always effectual when given right direction.

If we are not satisfied with what our lives express in their environment and bodily conditions, we must alter our desires and destroy our fears.

Freedom is to be had only on these terms. Back of all unrest is desire or fear gnawing like a worm at the root of happiness.

The imperfect results that we show in our activities are largely due to indecision and uncertainty of purpose. We need to learn that what we call ambition is a hindrance, not a help.

Large unfoldment is the only true aim of life, not great achievement or accumulation of material results.

The question is often asked, "How can I know my work and place?"

How do the planets find their orbits, and what keeps them true?

As we have said before, they move on the lines of least resistance, and we are subject to the same governing principle. This line is determined by our purpose.

We alternate continually between a belief in fate and an uncomfortable sense of personal responsibility.

Destiny and will, and our particular relation to them, are the questions that most vex us. We find it difficult to adjust these powers to our control and satisfaction. They are the columns upon which life rests, but the point of juncture in the arch that joins them is above the clouds and beyond our mortal sight.

Our proposition is incomplete. We are undertaking higher mathematics before we have mastered the tables.

There are other factors necessary to the solution of such questions which are not yet within our grasp. At this point faith becomes a scientific principle.

All natural science is based upon the postulate of an atom. This is an hypothesis that is not yet supported by any evidence of the senses. We have never seen, heard, tasted, smelled, or touched an atom. Yet we make it the corner-stone of all material science. We predicate its shape, move-

ments, and combinations. The most powerful microscope has not as yet revealed its existence, but this in no way disturbs our faith. We regard the atom as something infinitely small. Why should we not accept a law that governs it which is infinitely great? Let us attribute to this government infinite wisdom, power, and benevolence, expressed in an unfailing accuracy. This new factor helps us to contemplate fate with a sense of personal safety. It puts in our hands a magic-lantern which throws a flood of light upon one part of our problem.

Every revelation of science tends to strengthen and confirm this theory of orderly government.

Nature insists upon perfection, and all defective types carry the seeds of their own destruction. All healthy life perpetuates itself with an increasing power and momentum.

We believe that the law that governs the universe governs every single planet of its system. We must carry this statement further and apply it to every detail of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, else the atoms would move in chaos and all life would be erratic and indeterminate. What, then, could hold the planets in their orderly movement? If we accept this view we must include the individual life of man in the operation of the law. We must also extend it to every moment of his existence and every incident of his experience. We must choose between absolute government

and absolute chaos. There is no middle ground conceivable.

This does not lead us to fatalism in the usual understanding of that word. We recognize a universal power and with it we identify man's will. We perceive that as he unfolds he learns to concentrate and direct all natural forces — that he embodies in himself all nature's kingdoms, elements, and forms. We are compelled to see in him the lawful ruler and ascribe to him both power and responsibility, awaiting only his recognition and acceptance.

But before he can be crowned he must take the oath of allegiance to his higher self, which is the individual expression of an infinite good. Little by little man discovers that his limitations are altogether those of ignorance and are, therefore, wholly mental. Larger recognition brings larger demands and the power of appropriation grows with the mastery of larger expression.

Every imperfect and false note that has been struck in this attempt of the race to master the harmonies of life has left its vibrations in earth's atmospheres.

Science asserts that all vibrations are eternal, whether of light or sound. Thus every act of a human being must be ineffaceably stamped in his surroundings, and every sound remain in the great cosmic ocean.

There are pictured scenes of strife and sacrifice, of cruelty and heroism, of gentleness and love; sights and sounds of an infinite range, embracing every note to which the human eye or ear can make response.

There are mists and fogs of thought as well as turbulent seas and angry billows. Our bodies are subject to an estimated pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch of atmosphere and two hundred pounds of ether. Who shall estimate the power of the thought currents which continually swirl about us, bringing to every mind influences of restlessness or peace?

Our troubled dreams are from these wandering impulses impinging on our lower consciousness when in a negative condition. Their influence will sometimes cling to us on awakening as moisture to our garments on a foggy morning at the shore. Much of our depression in the early hours of the day may be traced to superficial experiences on the astral plane. If we will recognize them as of no more significance than the passing clouds or showers of spring we may easily shake them off as we would the water from our clothes. Thought climates are as yet unrecognized by meteorologists. Yet they are no less real than those we seek for the relief of fleshly ills, and they are stimulating or depressing to our mental life. They are the secret impulses of those that surround us,

the subtle emanation of their inmost purpose and desire.

Until one has developed his individuality he is constantly subject to these mental currents. As his own thought becomes more definite in its aims and positive in character he ceases to suffer from the thoughts of others.

When we are ready to yield to others all that we can give of loving help we shall not fail of anything we need in return. The compensation may take different form from what we would have chosen, but it will be none the less real. It may not be so much in the way of gratification as of discipline and a lesson in self-control, but whatever it may be it will surely add to the riches of our life, for it is the expression of the perfect law of equity, and with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again. When we have given to another all it is our privilege to give we will receive whatever it is our privilege to get from any person with whom we are brought into the relations of the home, the office, or society.

Through such relations we will pass to larger and better conditions, or, having fulfilled the purpose for which we were brought together, our lives will now diverge for working out the higher good of both. With this conviction we can look back without regret and forward without fear. Is it not better to frankly recognize this truth and work

consciously and intelligently with it than to indulge ourselves in passive resentment or personal antagonism? In moments of clear vision we perceive that we have no enemy but ourselves, and that all our varied experiences have been the manifestation of our own unsuspected impulses.

If suffering brings us to this discovery at last its only purpose is fulfilled and we can go on our way rejoicing. We can at all times open our ears to either harmony or discord, for there is no environment yet discovered where either exists without the other.

Through the science of adjustment we learn to relate ourselves pleasantly and helpfully to every individual and incident that comes into our lives. Impatience delays results, while ready acceptance hastens them.

Success is the expression of true individuality. None can bestow it on another. None can prevent or hinder. It must be won by each of us, and through the winning we accomplish our development. This is a simple creed and one that never needs to be revised, as every step of progress furnishes fresh evidence of its truth.

We talk of love as an emotion, when we ought to recognize it as a principle that underlies the universe. Emotional love as compared with the spiritual principle is as the fleck of foam blown from the crest of the wave. It is but a faint suggestion

of the tranquil depths below which no wind has ever ruffled and no sounding-line has ever fathomed. True love is a spiritual atmosphere rather than a personal impulse. It seeks nothing for itself but the opportunity of expression. Jealousy is greed of affection. It is the selfish clamor of unloving thought. It is a parody of love and always without excuse.

To understand life intelligently through all its various expressions it is necessary to distinguish between cause and occasion. We often confound the two. The wind that lays low one forest tree only strengthens another in its powers of endurance. The tree fell not simply because it was in the path of the gale, but because it was unsound or not deeply rooted. The storm was the occasion of its fall, but the real cause was in itself.

All our difficulties are but tests of our powers. None of them are sufficient to explain our failures. With every tribulation comes some comforting angel who is interested in our triumph and will reinforce our strength if we will accept the service that he offers. All the good powers of the universe are drawn to our side in the day of battle if we raise the banner of truth. The only boon truth ever asks is the opportunity of expression through our lips and lives, that *we* may receive her benediction.

Truth has never known defeat, and in so far as

we ally ourselves with truth do we become invincible.

No chains of circumstance can fetter the true man. He asks no odds of fortune, and in every hour of adversity he expresses power, and calmly awaits the victory he knows is sure to come.

Nothing can be "beyond our strength," though much may be beyond our present understanding of how to make that strength available.

Eagerness and indolence are both obstructive
and result in suffering.

Nothing can come to us except we draw it.

Nothing can stay when we let go.

Nothing can go till it has fulfilled its purpose.

Nothing that we can do can bring discredit upon truth.

If truth were dependent upon mortal demonstration for its credit it would long since have suffered bankruptcy.

Neither can we make a sacrifice for truth. It always compensates abundantly an honest seeker.

XI.

THE POWER OF GLADNESS.

Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.
— *Nehemiah* viii. 10.

WE cannot play the chords of "success" upon an instrument relaxed by disappointment and discouragement, nor with the harp-strings held at nervous tension by anxiety and fear. Doubt and longing are destructive of all harmonies. Only a masterful confidence in the universal Life and in ourselves as its expression can strike the notes of power and produce the clear, full tones in which true purpose finds complete accomplishment.

"Be happy and you will be good" is a very wise injunction. We may also add, "Through happiness you will be successful." It is the nature of happiness to radiate and enlarge its expression by finding others with whom it can share its joys. Goodness and happiness are really interchangeable terms. When we have succeeded in obtaining happiness for ourselves or others we may be sure we have been gaining and bestowing both goodness and power.

The only trouble with many people is stagna-

tion through depression. Their chief lack is momentum. A little more forceful motion would take them altogether away from their difficulties and diseases. They wear their yokes like oxen, because they do not realize the power in themselves. Let their realization be awakened, and their spiritual will aroused and applied with its tremendous energy, and all bonds and obstructions will easily fall away from them.

There is no force that can accomplish this more quickly than the thrill of joy and gladness. There is no stimulant that is more speedy or thorough in its action. It is a natural tonic, and the entire system responds to its exhilarating vibrations. Anything that arouses confidence in life, with a larger sense of its use and beauty, increases human energy and prepares the best conditions of success in all its undertakings. It is even better to build castles in the air than to dwell in caves of gloom. The imagination is more worthily employed in picturing pleasant things than in brooding fears and entertaining dark forebodings. It is better to "whistle going through the woods" than to look for hobgoblins in every shadow.

We are never left in life with an entirely empty cupboard. There is always some little portion of fat to eat and sweet to drink, if we will only go our way and look about us and not allow the leanness of our grief to absorb our thoughts, or our tears

to blind our eyes and fill every cup with bitterness. Simple life is very sweet and pleasant to a normal nature, even when stripped of everything that most consider necessary to happiness.

If one has awakened to an understanding of the real and a power of discernment of the artificial — if he has developed the creative instincts of the soul — he is no longer swept away by tides and currents he cannot control. In joy he finds his strength, and no change in externals can deprive him of the gladness of to-day. What have I to do *L* with the yesterdays or the to-morrows of my life? My responsibility lies strictly in the present. Why should I scatter and weaken my thought-forces by regretful recollections of the imperfect yesterday or anxious anticipation of the uncertain morrow? I will concentrate all my energies upon the passing hour, and thus will atonement be made for the past and grace developed for the future. To-day — *to-day* I live. The grief of yesterday is past. To-day I triumph. To-morrow shall find me still a victor.

Let us not look at the shadows that lie behind us, but rather at the sunbeams that fall across our paths; for “every shadow points to the sun.” We can easily lift our feet over the pebbles that lie in our road to-day, but we must let our thought dwell with the spirit that guides us, — not with the feet or the pebble. We are so ready to magnify every

trouble. We take life much too seriously. At a point a little farther on we will find that the most tragic conditions of the present have vanished like the mists of the morning when the sun has climbed to its meridian, and we will hardly be able to recollect even the cause of our happiness — so expansive is the nature of existence.

True life is an *ever-present* opportunity. It is not concerned with past or future. It is in the lowlands only that we suffer from the malaria of memory and fear, and our spiritual perceptions are bedimmed and paralyzed. We have become like the sleepers in the enchanted palace. Then comes the Deliverer; the Messiah — the joy of the Christmas morning — the awakening of the spiritual nature; and we enter upon the road that leads from Bethlehem to Paradise.

One does not need a battlefield on which to prove his heroism. The opportunity is offered daily in the home, the shop, the office, and the factory. Great souls need never be beggars of "circumstance" to manifest their quality. They are masters of all conditions, and respond with equal cheerfulness to all demands of daily living.

We cannot inventory the resources of our life. Its unexpected opportunities continually surprise us. They are not limited to any age, condition, or place. Our boldest demands and expectations are

but paltry when compared with what an awakened spirit soon makes actual.

We too often hasten through the passing days with but scanty enjoyment or stolid endurance, looking hazily to some distant time for the fulfilment of desire. The best conditions for future happiness lie in the largest possible appreciation of the present. This is a truth we all admit; yet we spend our lives in following happiness as a phantom and blinding ourselves to present good. There are wells of water in the dreariest desert; yet many travellers have perished chasing a mirage.

If we wish to develop unlimited power we must make no conditions to right conduct. We must not insist upon the fulfilment of our personal wishes before we will consent to happiness or faith. We must cheerfully accept all surroundings, all "circumstances" of the present hour, as the best possible for our unfoldment. We must coöperate heartily with every difficulty or seeming obstacle, with entire confidence in the rule of the Eternal Equities, believing also that —

" That which is good
Doth pass to better — best."

〔 We should never contend with a fear. 〕 It is a waste of time and effort, and as useless as to argue with hysteria. We need to establish firmly in our

minds the thought of our own sovereignty. We never fear that which we know we can control, and we are here for the purpose of learning the mastery of what we call Fate. Let us snap our fingers at all the "Devils" of the ages — the formulated fears of humankind. Get thee behind me, thou Devil of Theosophy — "Karma;" thou Devil of Astrology — "planetary influence;" thou spiritualistic Devil — "obsession;" and thou Devil of Christian Science — "malicious magnetism"! Get thee behind me also thou great Dragon of Science — "heredity"! In comparison with these, one could almost welcome back again the old orthodox Devil — "Satan." I will not be bullied by the threat of malicious magnetism from the stars, from other persons, or from my own dead past of former incarnations.

Are we to forget that in the manger of our spiritual nature lies the "Prince of Peace," who is to put all things under his feet? If we turn to the contemplation of the divine power we embody, *all* our fears will pass away like the shadows of the night. Fear is a mental mirage. It is an optical illusion — a refraction of certain lines and angles due to our mental atmospheric conditions and to false lights that result in grotesque distortion of the real.

Strong armies have the least fighting to do to gain their ends. Heavily massed forces do not

follow the guerilla methods. Their strength is so evident that the weaker foe retires before their advance, with but faint demonstration of resistance. It is the feeble and broken ranks that are always the most harassed with conflict, and a retreat is almost sure to be disastrous.

All this is true in our daily experience. The only direction in which we can safely move is *forward*. Success is determined by our force of character and strength of resolution. When life is disturbed by perpetual conflict we may know that our method of campaigning is at fault. We have failed to bring our reserves to the front and to mass and direct our forces wisely. We have not understood and tested the resources upon which we could have drawn; else our advance would have been less difficult.

There is no greater source of weakness than to dwell upon the power of an adversary until our courage has been undermined. General Grant prepared for battle by assuring himself that the commanders of the opposing forces were quite as much afraid of him as he could possibly be of them. Many men persist courageously in the conviction of their inability. It is the only thing in which they fully believe, and every obstacle they meet is magnified by their erratic fancy and their feeble will. This is the worst possible form of self-conceit. It is the rankest kind of atheism.

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Let us snatch the trumpet from the lifeless hands of the dead self — defeated and slain on the field of battle, or sorely wounded with disappointment and grief. Let us raise it again to our lips and sound anew the brave notes of the charge. Let the bugle-tones ring out across the field, stirring every pulse to a forward movement, though we ourselves be faint and weary. Let the blasts be clear, and strong, with no uncertain sound, and many a wavering one shall be thrilled with a new life and confidence, and aroused to seize the spiritual victory that is assured to every determined soul. We will never sound the recall. Let us turn away from the grave of every disappointed hope, not with a dirge, but with a cheerful quickstep and triumphant march, like soldiers returning from the burial of a comrade — ready with brave hearts for the fresh conflict of the morrow.

In the study of vocal music the singer does not stop discouraged if he fails to touch immediately the high note struck upon the instrument. He tries again and again until he learns to reach and hold it with his voice; and then he tries a higher key and enters upon fresh efforts. At first when we sound the note of truth, the voice breaks in trying to give expression to it in our lives. Shall we therefore chide ourselves or one another, or shall we possess our souls in patience and keep to the score until we have trained ourselves to com-

pass the high notes easily? We *can learn* to "live the life." It is not beyond the power of any one. We may choose our own time and methods; let us allow to others the same freedom.

The keenest pleasure we receive through our sense life is but the faintest suggestion of the gladness of the spirit. Instead of distrusting and condemning the sensuous nature, and strangling its expressions, we should understand its spiritual correspondence. Spirit is altogether sensibility and knowledge.

Infinite peace and power are developed through the recognition of unlimited possessions. In this there is no fever of unrest — no eagerness of desire — because there is no sense of time or space, nor fear of loss.

Many persons have never yet been more than half born into their material forms. They are but sadly imperfect expressions of the spiritual beauty, power, and freedom that belong to them. We need not be afraid of too much happiness. Our most ecstatic glimpses have been but as moon-beams of an Arctic night compared with the broad noon of an eternal day.

Sleep and death are as the entrances of tunnels into darkness, from which we emerge to sunny landscapes of pleasant valleys, breezy table-lands, and mountain-peaks. In the enjoyment of the new experience we think no more of the shadows

through which we passed to reach it. The dark tunnel was but a brief incident in a long and delightful journey.

So are many of the experiences from which we shrink and in which we can see no necessity of the suffering that comes to ourselves and others. If we could perceive the vistas that are opened through these tunnel-days and the landscapes that lie beyond, we could find causes of gladness even in the shadows and feel no hardships in the journey.

To overcome disease or difficulty we must strike a vibration higher or lower than the one prevailing on the plane of its manifestation. It is useless to attack it on its own ground. This is like playing "tug of war" in which contending parties pull in opposite directions, and alternately gain and lose because their strength is evenly matched.

A nervous tension needs to be relaxed by striking a lower keynote. A depressed condition can be stimulated by a higher.

The everlasting problem is to maintain the balance between positive and negative conditions.

If the eagle's wings were unequal in length or power he could not direct his flight with certainty, or follow the guidance of his will and eye.

Mind and matter are the wings upon which we rise to higher conditions through the guidance of the will. These factors must be balanced and adjusted to each other. They are not essentially

at variance. We regard them as on unfriendly terms. We undertake to ignore or neutralize one or the other. The materialist is afraid to study spiritual conditions. The spiritual-minded person is often fearful of his own material and sense nature.

We cannot poise ourselves upon one wing alone. We are compelled to recognize and respect equally the animal and spiritual natures before we can progress in direct lines. A bird with a broken wing, a boat with a broken oar, will move but in a circle.

✓ Freedom involves complete command of both body and mind by the awakened spirit. ↗

As long as we hold any fear of what we call our lower or our higher nature we have not been emancipated.

We are often afraid of the largeness of the liberty we profess to seek, else why should we shrink from death, which we imagine will divest us of all influence of matter? We have lived in so narrow a horizon and so dim a light that we find our vision is but feeble when we lift our eyes to the sun.

We are still cave-dwellers, though we excavate our caves a little higher up the mountains where formerly we dug them in the valleys.

There are metaphysical as well as sensual caverns. The difference between the cliff-dweller and the mound-builder is only a matter of altitude. They are very much alike in the furnishings of their

abodes. We have not yet learned how to build houses without hands eternal in the heavens.

Our petty theories, whether materialistic or metaphysical, we will not find available for building-stones in spiritual mansions. Theories will change and crumble. Only principles remain unalterable. No principle can ever fail, though man may fail to hold himself in right relation to it.

There can never be such a thing as "a principle at stake." It is impossible to make an "extreme statement" of a principle. The extremes of truth are too far off for us ever to get within sight of them in our present state of objective being.

Our capacity for enjoyment is not sufficiently developed to expose us to any danger of excess of gladness. We very soon find that we have to catch and cook our own fish in life or go without our supper. If the fish are small and the cooking underdone we cannot blame any one but ourselves. This is the severe logic of evolution.

Search as diligently as we may, we will not discover in material things the key to satisfaction or the answer to our perplexities. Spirit alone can solve our riddles, for the reason that we are spiritual beings.

Eighteen hundred years ago a man stood by the banks of the Jordan preaching to the multitudes.

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness,
The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

He stood in the wilderness of Judea. The spot was a fit type of the dreary waste which had been made by Roman tyranny and Hebrew superstition. Church and state had combined to lay heavy burdens on men's shoulders and take all the joy and gladness out of life by their exactions. The wonderful civilization of that day had resulted through its selfishness, corruption, tyranny, and greed in making life itself a wilderness.

Into this desert came a voice of hope, a voice of praise, a voice proclaiming a kingdom mightier than that of Rome; a power greater than the Jewish priesthood. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, with its message of deliverance, the opening of prison doors and promise of liberty to the captive.

In this nineteenth century we hear again the voice of truth commanding that the oppressed go free. It finds humanity in a wilderness as dreary as that of Judea, enmeshed in an artificial civilization as grievous and burdensome as that of Rome, tyrannized by false religions as empty in their ceremonials and exactions as the creeds of ancient Judaism. And the voice arouses us to a new confidence in life, for it proclaims that the kingdom for which we have waited so long is the kingdom of man's own royal self-hood; that it is open to him whenever he chooses to ascend the throne. It declares that the only bondage to which

he ever really bows is the tyranny of his own mistaken thought. Why should not the oppressed go free?

The world is recovering to-day from the depression of a chronic hysteria into which it has been plunged by the religious teachings of the past and to which the mental tonics of new thought are being most successfully applied.

It is indeed true that the soul can create for itself a world into which pain and sorrow cannot enter. Is not this the only heaven we shall ever know? We may enjoy it to-day if we assent. The dogma of election is true, but it is we who elect *ourselves* to everlasting life or make ourselves liable (in the words of the Westminster Catechism) "to all miseries in this life — to death itself and to the pains of hell."

The soul continually pleads, "Come, ye, blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We scarcely realize the hold that superstition has on us — in the way in which we regard life and death. Long after our intellectual assent has been withdrawn and we have begun to protest against the irrational views which were impressed upon us in our early years by the traditions of the elders, we are unconsciously dominated by those first impressions.

Under these influences we still regard with great

solemnity all the little incidents and trials of our daily living.

We exaggerate their importance and give them a fictitious significance.

When we resent and resist our difficulties we provide the most favorable mental soil for their rooting and growth. The germ which would have easily passed over us harmlessly finds lodgment and nurture in our minds and rapidly externalizes itself upon our bodies. We suffer only because we fail to transmit the harmonies which crowd continually upon us and would have their passage through us if we would permit. We insist upon holding to the bass notes when we ought to let them go.

We could change the vulgar noise of our environment to heavenly music by opening our ears to the strains of the invisible choirs. Exaggerated seriousness is worse than much frivolity.

Serious natures are in danger of excessive tensity. This is the first symptom of disease.

The tree of close fibre is snapped by the hurricane that passes harmlessly over yielding plants which bend easily to the wind. Nothing from without can hurt us when we have learned the independence of true life. Nor can we suffer from the want of anything beyond our own resources.

When the soul is insulated from all outward conditions it manifests interior power.

It does not need to practise the musical scores of others or blend itself with any artificial keynote of legend or tradition. Its own utterances are musical as the flowing of waters or the song of birds.

Nothing outside itself is authoritative to the true life. No vows of obedience are necessary except to the higher self. When we move forward with the will and the step of the conqueror we leave far behind us all the hosts of difficulty that seemed to compass us about.

When we dwell upon the severity of law we forget that its inexorable action proves the infinite tenderness of the love which it fulfils.

Life is a succession of wonderful transformation scenes, producing marvellous results in their unexpected combinations.

Thought is the scene-shifter and stage carpenter. Nothing is beyond its skill and power in the moments of its highest concentration.

When we allow ourselves to move on railroad tracks of habit the rails get smooth, and the wheels turn without friction in the habitual direction.

If they do not carry us through a pleasant country we must relay the track of thought, and learn to apply our brakes and switches, for the thinker himself is the engineer.

If we will change the hungering to receive to a hungering to give we will close the avenues of

pain, and become receptive to a higher good, which will find in us the expression it is always seeking.

There is great danger in constant dissatisfaction.

Sooner or later it will involve the health or finances, or both, for it destroys the mental balance, and impairs the judgment.

If we indulge ourselves in sadness or impatience we may be always sure our sin will find us out.

Impatience opens the door to hysteria, anger, and insanity, which mark regular stages in the loss of self-control.

If we will brush the dust of selfishness from the lenses through which we look at life, we will find illumination for every emergency. Our spiritual vision will never be dimmed.

Out of the blackness of our night a star shines forth. It comes as a new thought suggesting a new confidence. We follow its glimmer, only to discover that it is the same star that the "wise men" of old saw in the East. Across the desert trail of our life it leads to a new Bethlehem. Its light grows stronger as it brings us to the birthplace of the Christ within ourselves. The spiritual man is the Emmanuel who embodies all the potencies of life. When we once have recognized this royal self and given it dominion over us we find and tread the way of power. In every life the personal man is crucified, that the Divine may

manifest its glory in the resurrection; and in the day of his awakening he knows that he has received—

“Beauty for ashes;
The oil of joy for mourning;
The garments of praise
For the spirit of heaviness.”

The powers of will and concentration are shown in vice and disease as well as in virtue and health. They manifest perversion of force and not failure. Ifs, Buts, and Ands are always links in our thought fetters.

Concentration is poise of mind rather than forced action.

Repose of spirit is absolutely essential to the highest expression of power.

We should neither dream through the day nor wake through the night; in both these ways we scatter force.

The higher self knows no fear and sees no obstacles.

It passes everywhere unhurt. All difficulties change into walls of defence behind it.

XII.

A PLEA FOR MATTER.

“ There was a man in our town,
And he was wondrous wise :
He jumped into a bramble bush
And scratched out both his eyes.
And when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main
He jumped into another bush
And scratched them in again.”

— *Mother Goose.*

A FRIEND in the West used often to amuse himself in asking and answering this conundrum :

“ What is matter? Never mind.”
“ What is mind? No matter.”

I quote him to illustrate two of the popular illusions, for mind and matter are no longer regarded by advanced thinkers as different elements of life.

We are continually proving their identity. It has long been our habit to set up these two factors as opposing forces.

We are emerging from the dark ages of materialistic thought.

We have felt that we were bound and limited by matter, that we were held to the animal plane by the dominion of material things even after we

have recognized the fact that we are spiritual beings. We have believed that our highest glory in the future would be to pass far away from the necessity and use of matter. Of late the popular thought has been showing a reaction.

Mind is asserting itself as the governing power even in the mortal life. Materialism has had its day both in science and religion. There is danger in this reaction as great as that we have escaped. That classic rhyme of Mother Goose is again proving true. History repeats itself. We put out our eyes in the bramble bush of materialism and now seek to scratch them in again in another bramble bush of most irrational idealism.

The conflict between mind and matter has long been going on in our planetary arena. The time has come at last when matter itself is getting bullied. It no longer clears the ring as formerly, and impales everything upon its horns.

A recently developed school of metaphysicians impudently asserts that it has no real existence.

It denies it even the respect of recognition except to denounce it as a will-o'-the-wisp.

This should entitle it to sympathy, and it is time we came to its relief. In the past men have denied the existence of spirit and taken away our wings.

To-day in denying matter they do not leave us a leg to stand on. Is not one illusion as bad as the other? We have suffered much in an unreasonable

emphasis upon the exclusive reality of the senses. We will continue to suffer if we seek to ignore matter or denounce it as a thing unworthy to be recognized by spirit. We have as good reason to distrust a teacher or philosophy that defines life as a dream and matter as non-existent as those that assert that there is no reality outside material form.

Matter and mind are two sides of the triangle of life. Whichever we choose to study first will bring us surely to a recognition of the other.

The scientist comes to a point where he is compelled to erect an altar to the unknown God, while the spiritualist finds it necessary to become a student of the science that he has perhaps despised.

Nowhere is superstition more prevalent than in materialistic minds. On the other hand, there are none who show deeper concern for the welfare and comfort of their bodies than those metaphysicians who deny the reality of matter.

We live alternately in two very different phases of experience, and often they so blend that "one world at a time" becomes a real impossibility.

Doubtless all conditions have illusions that are peculiar to themselves. One who has dropped the coarser body is not living a more real life than one who wears the earthly garments. It isn't necessary for a man to deny the reality of

his overcoat because he has at the same time a good suit of underwear. Neither the underwear nor overcoat is in itself sufficient for all times and places. The illusions of what we call "the other life" are as bewildering, no doubt, as those that especially belong to this. If this is a school-room in which we study coarser matter, that is one in which we study sublimated matter. Life has many mansions, and, so far as we know, they are all school-rooms. The playgrounds do not belong exclusively to either state of existence. It is as much a privilege to the spiritual being to try its legs in the material world as to try its wings in the astral. All religions have called life a dream, but when and where do the realities exist if not here and now? This is a world of affairs, and in it we work out by day the lessons we have studied in the world of mind at night. By and by we shall remain longer in the higher grade, and find there too affairs in which we shall apply the knowledge we have gained in matter. All power is the expression of knowledge. This is attained only through experience. Hence our need of constantly changing relations toward all the factors of existence, mental and material.

As soon as we have gained adjustment to one situation we encounter another, demanding the exercise of unused forces. In this way our illusions are dispelled as the sun of our consciousness

climbs higher in the heavens. The domain of matter is not of necessity a twilight land. If we are ready to open our eyes to the light we will find the high noon of spirit here as well as elsewhere.

Mortal life is not a dream, except to those who prefer to sleep, and to such will come an hour of rude awakening. There are many dreamers, also, on the astral planes. The passage of the Styx does not serve always to dispel illusions. It sometimes deepens them.

Mental treatment is as much a necessity after death as before to those who prefer to believe that the actualities of life belong to future states of being. The horizon line of the spirit is ever a vanishing perspective. Forever it recedes as we advance.

If we live in the belief of necessary bondage to either mind or matter we must suffer the penalty we have imposed upon ourselves, till we awaken to the truth of freedom — individual and universal.

After studying navigation in the schools we seek the open sea to put its principles into operation. When we have finished the academical course of civil engineering we need the fields and forests for our theodolite.

The botanist and geologist return from the mountains and plains to the quiet of the laboratory to analyze and classify the specimens with which they

have filled their satchels. So does the soul exchange its tranquil home in the realms of spirit for the more turbulent activities of material life, where it may demonstrate its powers, and so does it return again with its garnered sheaves of earthly knowledge to the contemplation of its triumphs and defeats. There are always two voices sounding in our ears, the voice of fear and the voice of confidence. One is the clamor of the senses, the other is the whispering of the higher self. If we listen to the first we are unnerved. If we give heed to the other, we develop power and become invincible. When the young sailor climbs to the topsail yards for the first time, and looks down upon the narrow deck of his little craft rocking so far below him, he sometimes grows dizzy at the unaccustomed height and is in danger of falling. His shipmates, perceiving his danger, will call out to "look aloft." He turns his eyes to the great blue above, forgets the swaying ship, and feels himself at home in the wide expanse of sky that stretches out around him. It appeals to his higher sense of soul. His eye grows steady. He recovers his balance, and gains a firm hold on the foot-ropes.

"O Lord, thy sea is so great and my little boat so small," prayed the old monk; "grant, I pray thee, that thy great sea may not swallow up my little boat."

When we look aloft we accept both sea and boat as realities and recognize the truth that the soul is the greatest reality of all and controls all else; thus we place ourselves in right relations to both mind and matter and complete our triangle.

When science has admitted that the atom is intelligent and indestructible it has transmuted matter into mind, for we know of nothing else than mind that can make these claims.

Matter and mind are twin offspring of one parent, spirit.

"Every molecule of matter," says Professor Dolbear, "sets the whole visible and invisible universe in a tremor through its radiating waves. A crystal cannot be turned over in the hand without affecting everything outside of it."

Matter is a vehicle of sensation, and through sensation we learn the material lessons of this school of Earth.

There is sensation in matter because there is mind, and there is always matter present in sensation through the movement of the atmospheric or etheric waves.

Matter offers the resistance necessary for demonstration of the superior power of mind. It is the substance that we came to study and to control.

This resistance of matter is as necessary as atmosphere and wings to the flight of the bird.

In earth we find the plastic substance in which to study the art of living.

If matter had no existence, how could we have an objective life?

Through matter we learn all that we know of history.

In the material ruins of ancient cities, temples, and palaces we come in touch with the far past. Through its tablets and monuments we acquaint ourselves with the world's records until such time as we can read the astral pages upon which all history is inscribed.

In fossils and petrifactions we learn the story of evolution.

Through aerolite and solar spectrum we discover the similarity and difference of other worlds in their material conditions.

There is no matter without motion. There is no motion without mind. Atoms and thoughts are alike magnetic, and through the selecting principle attract all other atoms and thoughts of the same vibration. Matter is mind at a slower rate of vibration. Mind is matter at a higher rate. Spirit is infinitely more rapid than either and rules both.

It is as disastrous to have too little respect for matter as to have too much. If we appreciated it better we would value more highly the power of mind that governs it. It is as wrong to distrust our bodily organs or our fortunes as to

distrust our minds. The body we despise will shrink away from us and lose its power and beauty. The fortunes we neglect and spurn will quickly pass to other hands.

The larger the development of mind the larger will be its expression in material brain tissue.

When we have mastered matter we will have mastered death, and signed our own emancipation proclamation.

Until that task has been achieved we have not completed our material studies. Between the highest vibration that reaches the ear, and the lowest vibration that reaches the eye, there is an immense and unexplored domain.

We have as yet no senses that can come in contact with it and translate its phenomena.

With only five senses very imperfectly developed, slaves of matter as we are to-day in many ways, are there no lessons worthy our attention to tempt us back for other incarnations?

Have we so mastered the mathematics of this planet that we are ready now to triangulate the universe? The purpose of life should be the discovery of our real relations to the environment we have drawn about us.

True life in matter is simple and painless. Normal living is a delight when we understand that there is more of everything we want than we can possibly require for use.

Mind cannot sink in the sea of matter. There is nothing that can drown or starve us but our fears.

Why should the philosophy of reëmbodiment, which has been always held by the larger part of the world, including its most distinguished minds, be so distasteful to a few who have not until recently been made familiar with its teachings?

Because we have learned one or even a dozen of the three thousand tongues of human kind, are we ready to converse with angels, and be enrolled in the schools of the hierarchies? Is one short term sufficient for us? Have we in one brief life sounded the depths and scaled the heights of human knowledge? What do we really know of life on higher or on lower scales than those to which we were born? Can the peasant and the sovereign, the scholar and the tramp, adjust themselves to one another's hardships, responsibilities, and opportunities, and apply to them the principles they have found useful in their own?

Is the pupil who has been only through the simple tables of arithmetic prepared for the calculus and conic sections? How far have we advanced in the control of matter while we are mastered by famine and tornado, to say nothing of the extra cup of coffee at our breakfast table, or our fear of being kept awake at night because our tea is a trifle "strong"? This planet offers infinitely

greater opportunities of knowledge and happiness than most have discovered. We have latent within us such power over matter as we have but just begun to dream.

In the scheme of creation we shall ourselves rank as creators, with ability to disintegrate and reintegrate at will such forms as we shall choose to bring into visible existence. We have hardly begun to fathom the latent energies of either matter or mind. We have but recently discovered new properties in the atmosphere itself, and formed new theories of light. We are continually gaining evidence of the action of forces we have not even named. The wealth of material energy is beyond our classification, like the unnamed peaks of the Rocky Mountains that never yet have been explored.

We have not yet obtained possession of this objective life from which many appear so anxious to get away. If we had mastered matter we should find in it a greater satisfaction. With perfect strength and gladness in living, we would not nurse vain longings for a heavenly life. In these ways we acknowledge our defeat. We have fallen far short of perfect physical expression. We have not learned the earthly things and are not ready for the heavenly. The law of love works in matter as well as mind, and evolution tends always to perfection of species.

As long as matter in any form can make us afraid we are but raw apprentices. We have named the wild beasts, but we have not subdued them. We have inherited the garden of Eden, but we have not found its possibilities of cultivation, — only its trials and temptations. As long as we fancy ourselves dependent upon matter in any form for happiness we are only lackeys and not lords.

Our relation to matter is that of the sculptor to his clay.

The artist fashions the form in which he wishes to express some thought. He models and re-models it until his purpose has been perfected. Then he begins his work in the more enduring stone or bronze or marble which will admit of more complete expression. Our present work is in the modelling-room. When we have gained such mastery of matter that we can vitalize it with our thought at will we shall no doubt pass on to higher expression. Meanwhile we get the best results through confidence in our ability to choose and power to direct our lives. We are truly the architects of our own fortunes and should no longer seek to shelter ourselves behind the superstitions of "heredity" and "fate."

Every man is a "self-made man." He builds the temple that his soul inhabits. Whatever its beauties or deformities, they are the manifestation

of his own thought in the past, — even though that past has faded from his recollection.

There are unexplored areas of matter in the human brain and body as well as in the planet we inhabit. Very few of our motor centres have been localized yet in the brain to the satisfaction of the scientific mind. Science itself has given no complete definition of matter. It has named certain properties, such as cohesion and gravitation. It has discovered that every particle attracts every other particle, and that the law of specific gravity governs the relations of one mass to another.

Matter is the matrix of mind. It receives the impress of the thought and expresses it in form. As Ovid says, "The underworld receives the image. The spirit seeks the stars."

Matter and mind are necessary to one another for expression of spirit. Each provides us with lenses for the study of the other.

We should neither fear nor hate, despise or love either matter or mind, but recognize in both the servants of soul.

In the Canary Islands there are but few forests and little verdure.

When the Spaniards landed there some centuries ago they cut down the trees and the springs dried up. The springs were fed by the trees and in their turn they watered them. The forests absorbed the moisture of the atmosphere. That

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Matter and mind are never separate. Matter is the lens for expression of spirit. Mind is the lens for lenses for the study of the world.

We should neither fear nor despise matter, either matter or mind, but approach them as servants of soul.

In the Canary Islands there is no fear and little credulity.

With the land of the sun,
there is, now, no fear,
which was not to be,
but where there
was a sun.

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rial life

of the soil was vaporized and drawn into the clouds, to be returned again in showers. Such is the beautiful circle of nature—a type of the reciprocal relations of matter, mind, and spirit, each necessary to the complete expression of the other.

In our western world we sometimes enthrone material forces and, like the old Ephesians, fall down and worship our great "Diana." We say, "Cotton is king!" "Wheat is king!" "Corn is king!" "Gold is king!"

We talk of the "Almighty Dollar," and yet we know in our hearts that these things have no power except that conferred upon them by the human mind. Mere puppets, all of them, and pitifully weak and helpless in themselves. Like the lay figures of the artist, we invest them with a transient glory and fictitious life, that they may serve us for a day.

The old Greek stoics taught that man should live above sensation and be indifferent to pleasure and pain. Epicurus claimed, upon the other hand, that everything was good that gave man pleasure, and everything that gave him pain was evil. May we not embody both these teachings in our new philosophy and recognize the use of all sensation in the development of spiritual consciousness? The human soul must not be wrecked on shoals of matter, or blown off its course by winds of

doctrine. Our greatest dangers are not those we see or feel.

When we understand matter it can no longer crucify us.

We must needs become lords of life and death. When we can truly say of the body, "I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again," we shall have finished our course. When that point is reached we shall be invulnerable to all material forces, superior to all the elements, fearless of all earthly conditions.

Before we can gain this power we must change our attitude toward matter, and what we have ignorantly called its laws.

We have been trampled by its hoofs till we have thought that matter was our enemy. We have denounced it as the foe of spiritual life and have resented the necessity of living in a material body in a material world. We have sought to punish and starve the senses in the vain delusion that we would thus give satisfaction to the spiritual nature. Such experiments have never been tried successfully.

When the tides of life have brought us any good it must be quickly seized and used, else the ebb will carry it out again beyond our reach. We should be friendly in our attitude to everything we meet.

We should welcome and enjoy the material life

in order to accomplish the highest development of the spiritual nature. Growth comes always through satisfaction. We give the child toys in its nursery days, and do not keep it in a state of perpetual unrest. Let us make the body comfortable in every reasonable way, in order to secure the freedom of the mind. Thus will we avoid needless conflict, and gain a larger control of both mind and body, while we move steadily forward toward the absolute mastery of both. This is not a plea for indolence or self-indulgence, but for an orderly and reasonable life in which mind and body shall find their true relations to each other, and learn obedience to the will of the soul. Soul power manifests itself in the largest degree of opulence, health, and happiness, and not in poverty, asceticism, and disease. When we have learned to live we will find the body an organ of wondrous power, and never a clog or hindrance.

It will be both pálace and temple, and never a prison house. We will find wings in its feet and brains in its finger-tips. Fear and helplessness will be impossible. A constant and buoyant gladness is the right expression of true life. Life on the material plane offers every possible facility of spiritual development which we can ever require. As long as we are dissatisfied at any point we have failed to learn the lessons set before us, and are in no state of mind to find happiness elsewhere.

Our health and fortunes suffer through our failure to recognize the opportunities of to-day.

Right here in the world of matter are the building-stones of the New Jerusalem. The quarries lie all about us. All that we wish to manifest can be done here and now. All that we wish to possess lies close at hand, even to jewelled crowns of power, and the sceptre of archangels. Should we go on our way whimpering and calling life a dreary pilgrimage, and longing to go "home to God"? Is not this world fit for the palace of any Deity of which the human mind can conceive?

We cannot believe in God and refuse to believe in matter.

We cannot study matter and not find God.

Nature feeds us upon all sides. We draw our life through millions of pores, and give expression to it in diverse and wonderful ways.

We cannot increase our power over matter by denying its existence and revising the dictionary.

Matter is objective mind. Mind is subjective matter.

If we had vivid realization of the forces we have been accustomed to employ as spirit on the subjective planes of our existence, we would find no difficulty in manifesting the same power in the objective life. It is always our doubts that para-
lyze our energies.

Power is the purpose of life. Law is its expression. Man must master law and become a law unto himself before he can manifest the full freedom of power. Nothing but himself can fix his limitations. Resentment of trouble shows that the soul instinctively knows the needlessness of suffering in any form.

Imagination cannot outstrip the power of execution. Large conceptions of the soul's potencies speedily manifest themselves in material life.

It is impossible to overestimate the power of spirit or raise too high the standards of true idealism.

The present is as infinite as the past or future.

We may have full assurance that *man is unconditioned being* — "*existence absolute*." When this central truth is once embodied, man and God become inseparably united.

The Son of man is the Son of God.

It is not conceit to realize and claim our spiritual powers.

It is only the egotism of the personal man that ever doubts or denies them.

We call ourselves practical when our actions appeal to the sense life, and their good results are felt or heard or seen.

We are never truly practical except when we have learned to govern and apply our highest thought.

All devils are friendly.
They test our power and reveal our weakness.
Many of man's highest revelations come to him
through his hurts and bruises.
The temptation of devils always precedes an
evolution of force.

XIII.

THE SONG OF LIFE.

“ Strains musical, flowing through ages, now reaching hither,
I take to your reckless and composite chords, add to them, and cheerfully pass them forward.”

— *Walt Whitman.*

Listen to the song of Life.
Store in your memory the melody you hear.
Learn from it the lesson of harmony.

Only fragments of the great song come to your ears while yet you are but man. But if you listen to it remember it faithfully, so that nothing which has reached you is lost, and endeavor to learn from it the meaning of the mystery which surrounds you. In time you will need no teacher. For as the individual has voice so has that in which the individual exists. Life itself has speech and is never silent, and its utterance is not, as you that are deaf may suppose, a cry. It is a song. Learn from it that you are a part of the harmony. Learn from it to obey the laws of the harmony.

— “ *Light on the Path.*”

IN the old crusading days, when King Richard was returning to England after his battles with Saladin, he was taken prisoner by an Austrian baron and confined in his castle. Richard's comrade, Blondel, the troubadour, sought his place of concealment in order to release him. He went

wandering through Europe singing his minstrel lays outside castle walls and under tower windows in the hope that Richard might recognize his voice and know that rescue was at hand. At last he came to the Austrian dungeon. As he sung the old-time ballads there floated to his ear at last the familiar tones of his friend taking up the answering part of a song in which they had often joined.

Blondel hastened back to England, raised the ransom demanded for the king, and speedily accomplished his release.

This story is beautifully suggestive of the history of the soul.

Coming down through the forgotten ages of spirit life, man has wandered into matter. He seems to be a captive to the senses. Why he needed to come at all he may not have yet discovered. He only knows that every experience is valuable in the history of his evolution. He feels that his first and greatest need is freedom. *Assured* of this, all suffering would cease.

Liberty is the watchword of the world. All modern wars are undertaken in its name; all colonization schemes developed. We recognize it as the first condition of unfoldment.

Much has been said of the danger of losing our souls.

Can we ever be more lost than we are to-day?

As we awaken to real life do we not *find* ourselves and learn that matter is not an enemy, nor is the soul really fettered by the senses unless with its own consent. If we prefer the lower to the higher self our powers decline and our perceptions become dimmed, while even the sense life grows clouded and dull. We seem then to be cramped and shackled by material existence. The truth is dawning upon the world that the soul is always free and has the power of controlling and spiritualizing matter. As we become alive to what we are we hear the voice of spirit sounding in notes that are not wholly unfamiliar. New confidence and gladness are awakened in us, and we take up the responsive strains.

The first step toward freedom is right listening.

The next step is right answering to our part in the song of life.

It has been discovered that the reason some people do not easily learn a foreign language is not that they cannot pronounce well, but that they do not hear well.

Consequently the first work of the teacher is to open the ear of the pupil.

Nothing in life is of greater importance than that we should learn the law of harmony.

If we hear truly we shall live truly. Our higher self is lifting up its voice continually in song for our deliverance, but we hear only broken chords,

—we are so deafened by the tumult of the world in which we live.

The ear is a wonderful avenue of sense. More than eight thousand delicate nerves lead from it to the brain. As yet they are only partially developed. The average range of human hearing includes about twenty thousand vibrations to the second. The extreme limits appear to lie between sixteen and forty-two thousand.

Many insects hear a lower vibration and some animals a higher one than reaches our mortal ears.

Scientists tell us that a sound wave goes on forever.

The ether becomes a reservoir of sound that never perishes. Let us think for a moment of the tones that have been poured into it through the ages: nature's voices of earthquake and tornado, the roar of waters and of forest fires, the rustling of leaves, the humming of insects, and the songs of birds. There are, besides, alas! the noises of battle, the shouts of victors, and the groans and cries of wounded men.

Then, too, there are melodious strains — great bursts of organ music and chorus songs of worshippers, the prattle of children and the laughter of mirth and joy.

All human emotions have contributed to the song of life.

We may draw from this great reservoir of sound at will.

We may listen to the bass notes of human passion and suffering or to the lighter, higher strains of gladness. All have their place and purpose in the scale of being.

Through currents of sympathetic vibration the sounds to which we are attuned will reach our ears. If we hear only the lower tones of pain and sorrow all life seems to us a cry. If we are ourselves in grief we listen to minor chords. If we are selfish we hear the notes of selfishness. If we are happy we hear those of joy. Everything depends upon the place that we ourselves hold in the chromatic scale, whether we are most related to the wailings or rejoicings of the race. It is as true as that we choose the evening concert according to our taste in music. Our freedom of choice and action is as complete in one case as the other.

All life has speech and is never silent. The bitter cry of outcast London and the moans of famine-stricken hordes in India are as real as the song of the morning stars. If our ears were not so dull we would hear all these notes in their true relation to the symphony of life. We would not then be pained through our imperfect listening. As we develop spiritual sensitiveness and better understanding we will widen our range of hearing

and learn from nature that which will bring all sounds into harmony.

We will listen to the higher as well as the lower octaves. We will perceive the "motif" which runs through all the song, where now we hear, as well as see, imperfectly.

If King Richard had been deaf to Blondel's voice it would not have brought his deliverance.

If he had not sung the answering part his prison doors would never have been opened.

What makes the soul deaf to truth? What are the obstructions to right listening? Let us examine some of the laws of the harmony. Perhaps oftener than in anything else we fail through *discouragement*. We do not take life genially.

We moan at our own vexations, and the atmosphere in which we live seems filled with cries of disappointment and distress. Dissatisfaction with ourselves and our own lot dulls all sense of harmony.

If we have ever crossed the ocean we know that when we traced our course upon the chart in the cabin it never showed the shortest distance between two points. Yet we had sailed upon the most direct lines the winds made possible. When we were blown off by storms we set such canvas as the gales permitted, and our storm sails brought us back to the right tack. Our compass was always true to the north, regardless of wind and weather.

We never had reason for discouragement, and safely made port at last.

Why can we not take life as cheerily as the sailor takes his changeful voyage? We can never pay too dearly for experience, for it is all we get of any value here. Our suffering proves our need of the lesson that causes it. If it teaches us to listen more carefully to the inner voice we have made a distinct gain in spiritual hearing.

Discouragement results in pity for ourselves. This is a further cause of deafness; *self-pity* is an opiate that numbs the nerves of a higher consciousness.

In trying to evade our own responsibilities we deepen trouble and emphasize weakness. Our ear is at fault because we are not teachable. We will not patiently listen to the truth. We resent criticism because we are not seeking for our own weak points. We are not honest pupils of our higher selves. Sensitiveness to pain shows an unsound part.

Grief, too, makes us deaf to the song of life. We look into a grave. It seems so wide and deep it shuts out all the world of life. It is as if the sun had set in inky darkness and the clouds of our sorrow hang heavily about us. We do not wish to be comforted. We are dismayed or angry. We see only the great horror — Death. We hear only “Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes.”

If we will but listen to the higher voice we will even now know that death means only change of consciousness. It means fresh opportunities that bring new steps of progress to the awakening soul. If we will listen we shall hear:

"A music that entwineth with eternal threads of golden sound

The great poem of this strange existence,
All whose wondrous meaning has been found."

Let us turn our thoughts from the body to that which alone made the body dear to us, the loving and imperishable intelligence that animated it. This we cannot lose, for there is no separation to kindred spirits. If we will open our ears we will hear a new strain of gladness in the song of life — a clearer note that has been added to the Choir Invisible.

Another influence that dulls our hearing is *resentment*. We are impatient at the ills and inconveniences of life. We resent our pains and seeming helplessness. We cultivate the sense of vexation which comes from unpleasant people and undesirable conditions. As long as we indulge these feelings we prolong our difficulties. We must learn friendliness to all events and people that touch upon our lives. We need not dwell upon the things that most distress us, except to gain from them some larger knowledge of the laws

of harmony. If this is our most earnest purpose we will quickly find that everything contributes to its accomplishment.

Indecision is another note of inharmony. The more we listen to discordance the more the ear gets out of tune. If we have not reached a final decision in our own minds that we *can* be well and happy and prosperous, if we are not yet *quite sure* that life is really good and sweet and joyous in itself, we are not likely to hear melodious tones.

The work of reconstruction begins with action of the will.

With confidence in life restored and a true purpose assured, we will soon find our hearing is enlarged. The sound waves change their character and pass from grave to gay. We find in the song the ripples of merriment where once all was mournful and sad. We hear and see according to our moods as long as we permit our feelings to govern our lives. In the mist of the emotions all vibrations are refracted and unreliable.

But the one great hindrance to right hearing, which sums up and includes all others, is that most common weakness of humanity — *fear*. Fear is the great strangler. How we pride ourselves upon the faithfulness of "conscience" in applying its torture! An accusing conscience is the hand-maiden of fear. It has never been baptized into the freedom of the spirit. It dwells in bottom

lands infested with the ghosts of a dead past. It remembers chiefly disappointments and disasters. It feeds upon the bread of remorse.

It is deaf to the stirring strains of the song of life that should arouse every soul to the enjoyment of an ever-present opportunity and power.

It was just as necessary that Richard's voice should reach the ear of Blondel as that the tones of the troubadour should make his own presence known.

So must we sing clearly our answering part. It is through our response to spiritual chords that we find the way out of our houses of bondage.

We must answer in tones of *confidence*. We must drop the word and thought of limitations, must forget our prison days, let go the past, abandon our discouragements, self-pity, grief, and fear.

We will claim the strength that is our birthright. We will go forward in the confidence of victory with which men follow the flag, reckless of all threatening danger.

Our ready response shall be in tones of *gladness*, ringing clear and true without a quavering note.

We will not talk of faith only when we have the luxuries and superfluities of life. We will not moan when everything seems to be going away from us on an ebb tide. True gladness opens to us visions of unclouded skies.

The land of the soul is never swept by storms; it is never shadowed by darkness and uncertainties. There is in it no fear of evil.

This is our native home. We have never strayed from it except in thought. When we clear up our thought atmospheres we recognize again the familiar landscape. We know that all our distress has been a fantasy of the disordered senses. We have been bullied by shadows.

Now we will answer the song of the soul with a new sense of *freedom*. We will not creep any longer. We will arise and walk, and will not sneer if we are told that even wings are not the especial property of angels and artists. Perhaps some day we will learn to fly and be as careless of the breaking of the boughs beneath us as the birds who know their home is in the air.

|| We will meet all the experiences of life in tones of *patience*. We will not utter fretful complaints. We will not care if every day is not served up to us with all the niceties and dainties we have coveted. We will console ourselves with the reflection that our place is where we find ourselves, and our proper work is that in which we are engaged, till we have fitted ourselves for something different. We will no longer live in such a fever of unrest. We will not exhaust ourselves with constant hurry. There is surely time and opportu- ||

nity for everything in life that we should do. The centuries are ours. If we do not find time to live we shall very soon be forced to find time to die. Life administers severe rebukes to our impatience when we make it necessary. Nothing is more valuable than to learn how to wait cheerfully. It is good evidence that we are answering life's song in notes of *power*. Can we imagine infinite love that would be satisfied with children that were paupers? Can we believe that anything less than the largest good it could bestow would satisfy a love that is supreme? We have surely the right to claim for man all that we have ever thought of God.

If we are capable of conceiving love it is because we ourselves are loving. We understand wisdom to the extent that we are wise. We believe in power because we have its possibilities within us.

"I am an acme of things accomplished, I am an encloser of things to be," is the answer of the soul to the challenge of life.

"The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?"

Power is expressed in positive conditions. We cannot afford to risk the negatives. There is no danger to the fearless soul. All force seeks its service.

Power attracts power, as strong men enroll themselves under the banners of successful leaders.

The highest and best things are never behind us.
The choicest fruit is on the topmost branches.

The soul will never be satisfied with mediocrity. From every level it perceives another height towering above it and pushes forward strong and buoyant in the spirit of conquest and with no sense of weariness.

We will answer life's song in a spirit of *service*. 

Service is the law of harmony as it is the law of love.

It is in activities for others that we gain the largest freedom for ourselves.

In teaching others songs of gladness we open fountains of melody in our own hearts. In guiding others to the light our twilight is dispelled. In feeding others we appease our hunger. In helping others we grow strong.

We are never without our opportunities of service. Every opportunity brings with it its own power. Every sincere thought or act of helpfulness is an impulse of spiritual development.

We think sometimes that it belongs to those who possess to give.

Possession *comes* through giving, and not giving through possession.

The universal stores of God are open to every honest demand. God's work is never hindered for the want of supplies. Our theories of benevolence are often at fault, and we are apt to think the

thing we ought to give is that which we cannot command.

Responsibility and opportunity never exist apart. If we discover one we may know that the other is close at hand.

When we have learned that every human being is a part of the harmony we very soon begin to know its laws. When we are ready to obey them the discords of life are ended.

If the race had understood this the records of history would never have been blotted with blood; the drama of the stage would never be the picturing of crime and pathos; the worship of the temples would never be voiced in "Misereres" and confessions; the minor strains of life would never have found such utterances as these; religion would not have been a "binding back;" worship would never have become a cry of terror; creeds would not have been required as the expression of man's fears and superstitions. Of all the religions in the world there are none but what belittle human life and darken earth to brighten Heaven. The retina of the eye receives all images reversed, but the brain restores them to proper attitudes. The senses thus invert the truths of life. It is the soul alone that can interpret the vision.

Before the soul has been awakened we cannot understand the meaning of existence. All our

deities reveal the crudeness of our thought. Our images are blurred; our negative plates are so imperfect that we cannot get clear outlines in the positive picture. The lights and shadows are confused.

Man has successively outgrown all his Deities from Joss to Jehovah.

But still we grope in a world of unreality and think of happiness as something vague and far away.

Adown the centuries has come the voice of one whom Christians call "the Master." Legend and superstition have combined to make his accents fragmentary and uncertain. Dogmatists and translators have done what they could to mutilate the message. But out of all this babel of commentators we know to-day that the Nazarene's tones are so full of melody that when the ear of man has heard his whole soul listens. He hears anew the song of life and finds in it the grandest harmonies of earth. Jesus taught life as a science speaking with authority. The scribes have turned his teachings into weak, moral platitudes. Christianity itself has never proved a failure. It has never been tried. It has been taught as a theory. It has been followed as a "faith." But never yet has the Christian world believed it would be practical until after a "second advent" had transformed man and altered his conditions. How strangely deluded we have been! How could the

trail to the mines of truth have become so completely hidden? How could we have lived so long with an inverted vision and listened so long to the discords of theology? We have not thought it possible to learn the lesson of harmony outside the music schools of the Celestial City.

And now new voices from the unseen reveal to us that the earth life confers on man a privilege that angels covet; that here are the choicest fields in all the universe for the soul's harvesting; that we are as yet but pioneers blazing a path through matter, clearing the ground upon which shall be built the White City itself, with its jewelled gates and golden streets, rich symbols of such glories as the undeveloped mind cannot yet outline in its gross conceptions of life. Here are the highest problems of the soul worked out. Here will its stately mansions be built. Even now we faintly discern new notes in the great song as it is sung by human voices such as have not been heard for many centuries.

Now we really know for the first time that the law of love is the law of life, and that the golden rule is the most scientific proposition that has ever been submitted to a sceptical world.

We are even beginning to suspect that it is the only rock foundation upon which man can rear his governments, his social orders, or his financial institutions. All else is sand that many tides have

washed away before our eyes. The law of harmony permits no note of selfishness. The Sermon on the Mount is but a transposition of the science of Euclid. It is a key to all the mysteries that surround us.

By and by we shall find the fulcrum of the lever Archimedes coveted, with which we can move the earth itself.

By and by we shall call across the stellar spaces and wake the echoes of the distant stars.

The seven planets will be compassed by the circuit of our telephones. Our wireless telegraphy will send its messages to other spheres than ours.

On planes yet unexplored we will apply the spiritual principles we are learning here.

By and by we shall hear the song of a larger life and know the beauty of the astral harmonies.

The musical staff as we have it to-day has been the growth of centuries. One generation after another has added line by line as it found its scope too small. Man's sense life has expanded with his spiritual consciousness — one sense following another. His constantly increasing range of sensibility has demanded larger expression in music as well as literature.

The lines of the staff are the number of the senses. But musical instruments are very incomplete. We are told by a recent writer in "Atheism and Mathematics" that to get complete command

over all the keys used in modern music would require an instrument having seventy-two notes in every octave — that earth's instruments are out of tune, and no one can tune or play them perfectly.

This same author asserts that man's vocal organs are so carefully planned and constructed in accordance with mathematical and mechanical laws that they can produce every possible grade and shade of sound within a compass of a hundred to a thousand vibrations per second.

The time will come when in a grander chorus these human voices will utter sweeter songs than ever yet have been sung or written.

To-day we are but learning single notes.

To-morrow we shall blend them into chords.

The hour will chime when all humanity shall know the law of harmony — when every note in every chord shall find its part in the sublime oratorio of universal life.

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